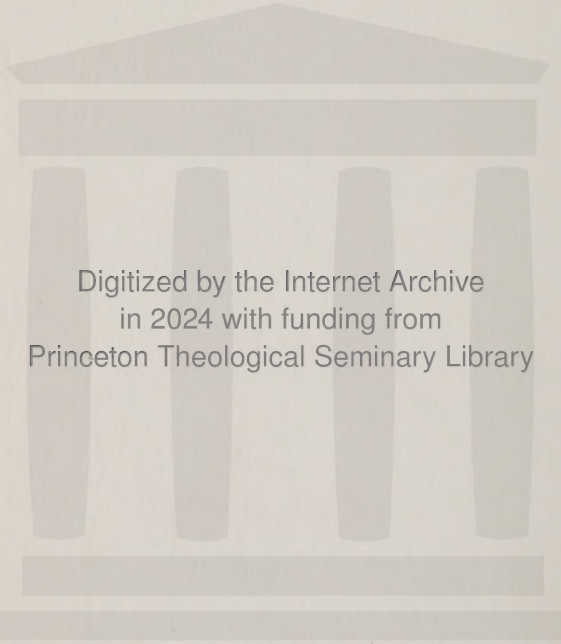






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# THE PAROUSIA:

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE SCRIPTURE DOCTRINES OF CHRIST'S  
SECOND COMING; HIS REIGN AS KING; THE  
RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD; AND  
THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

—δυνάμεις μέλλοντος αἰῶνος.—Heb. 6: 5.

BY

ISRAEL P. WARREN, D. D.

“Theologically, the way has been prepared for an entire revision of the domain of Eschatology.”—Hagenbach, Hist. of Doct., II p. 522.

“Let no man, taking the credit of a sobriety and moderation ill applied, think or maintain that men can search too far in the Book of God's Word; but rather, let them excite themselves to the search, and boldly let them advance in the pursuit of an endless progress in it: only taking heed lest they apply their knowledge to arrogance and not to charity, to ostentation and not to use.”—Lord Bacon.

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## PREFACE.

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It is with the utmost diffidence that I give this book to the public. The peculiar nature of the subject, the wide diversity of opinions concerning it among Christians, and the oft-expressed sentiment that any one who pretends to much confidence as to what the Scriptures design to teach us in relation to it betrays a lack of mental sobriety, if not of sanity, might well deter men of far greater professional ability than myself from anything so rash. But having, after many years of study begun under the most painful perplexities, attained certain views of the subject which afford great satisfaction to my own mind, I cannot resist the feeling that others similarly perplexed may possibly be equally relieved by a statement of those views and the grounds on which they are based. That feeling has been much strengthened by the favor with which some articles on the Parousia published a year or two ago in the CHRISTIAN MIRROR were received, and the very frequent requests since made that they might be printed in a more permanent form.

I am not vain enough to expect that all, perhaps not even many, will accept the views here set forth. Some will reject them outright, without investigation. Many others will stand in doubt, or more actively oppose them, because in a few respects—matters of form and costume chiefly—they differ somewhat from the more commonly accepted views. Still, I venture to crave a candid hearing from all, and an unprejudiced comparison of the positions taken with the Scriptures, “whether these things are so.” And if there be a seeming of presumption in venturing to publish any views on such a subject, let this be my apology, that God has taken many ages and used many builders in rearing up the edifice of Christian truth, and though all may not be master builders, yet each one, even the humblest, may bring his brick, which the great Proprietor will find a place for.

One or two remarks I may be permitted to make as to the principles of interpretation which have guided me in this inquiry.

The first is to have primary regard to the ideas and modes of speaking current among the Jews in Christ's day. Says Prof. Stuart, in his Letters to Channing, “Nothing is clearer to my apprehension than that God, when he speaks to men, speaks in *language which is used by those whom he addresses.*” Having for

fifteen hundred years been trained under the expectation of a coming Messiah and of what he would do for them and the world, their language concerning him had to a considerable extent become technical and special. Of course, our Lord and his apostles conformed to the usage of their countrymen, and we can know their meaning only by making ourselves for the time being one with them. It is the violation of this principle, I cannot doubt, which has led to most of the confusion appertaining to the common views of eschatology. What sort of knowledge would be gained of our own times by writers living two thousand years hence who should utterly ignore our peculiar theories and phrases in politics, philosophy and religion, and persist in interpreting them according to the ideas that should prevail at that time?

Further than this, I have not believed that any peculiar modes of interpretation were requisite. I have never seen any reason why the Bible should not be read precisely like any other book,—I mean, of course, if there be only a reverent recognition of its Divine origin, and a deep spiritual sympathy with its sacred themes. Its meaning is that of its words, in their plain historico-grammatical sense modified only by the figures of speech common to all languages, and the local Jewish usage above referred to. All peculiar theories of symbolism, and type, and double sense, and the like, which seem contrived to fit the Scriptures to opinions already formed rather than to be safe guides to their formation, I am obliged to regard as both unwarranted and mischievous.

With this, it has seemed to me, there should be joined a reasonable degree of hermeneutical independence. Protestants, at least, believe not only in the right but the *duty* of private judgment. While fully recognizing the claims of authority, and deferring, as is most proper, to the opinions of scholars, and especially to the statements of venerable creeds and formularies, I cannot forget that these have not, in fact, been infallible guides, but that notwithstanding them doubt, diversity, and distrust still envelope the whole field of eschatology. Is there not a better guide for a simple inquirer after truth to be found under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit in the convictions of plain common sense,—the *synecidesis* of every man, to which the great apostle strove to commend himself and his teachings in the sight of God?

I shall welcome from every source whatever light will serve to correct any error into which I may have fallen, and give to the church a deeper and more fruitful knowledge of the Divine teachings as to the coming and kingdom of our Lord.

PORTLAND, January, 1879.

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## PART I.

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# THE PAROUSIA.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE TERM AND ITS SIGNIFICATION.

The term employed in the New Testament to denote the second coming of our Lord is, in the original, THE PAROUSIA. "What shall be the sign of thy *Parousia*?" Matt. 24: 3. "So also shall be the *Parousia* of the Son of Man." Matt. 24: 27, 37, 39. It will be our first endeavor to ascertain its exact meaning.

How the word came to be used in this special application is not known. I am not aware that the Jews had ever been accustomed to apply it to the appearance of the expected Messiah. It is found but twice in the Septuagint (2 Macc. 8: 12; 15: 21), and there only in its ordinary secular meaning. In the New Testament, it first occurs in this inquiry of the four disciples on the Mount of Olives. They had now become in a degree familiar with the idea that their Lord was about to leave them for a time and afterwards return, and that he would then set up the

kingdom they were looking for, and reward therein his faithful friends who had followed him unto death. Matt. 16: 27, 28. Their conceptions were indeed very imperfect, but such as they were, they awoke in them the highest expectation, and prompted to unseemly rivalries for the foremost place in its honors. Contrasting, then, that eagerly expected period with the brief duration of his present stay with them, they seem to have fondly named it *The Presence*, as implying that he would thereafter permanently remain with them, and admit them into an intimacy of intercourse and of relations surpassing all they had before enjoyed.

It matters little, however, in what way the word came to be used by the disciples in this sense, for it was immediately sanctioned and confirmed by Christ himself. Thrice does he employ it in the same sense, in the discourse that follows. Like the lightning which fills the whole heaven with its splendor, and like the deluge which surprised the old world in the midst of its business and its pleasures, "so likewise," he declares, "shall be the *Parousia* of the Son of man."

The signification of the word is the *Being with*, or the *Presence*. It is derived from the compound verb *παρϐειμι*, from *παρά* with, and *εἰμι* to be. Instances of the use of this verb in the New Testament are the following: "There *were present* at that season some that told him of the Galileans." Luke 13: 1.—"Certain Jews who ought to *have been here* before thee." Acts 24: 19.—"I verily \* \* have judged already as



though I *were present*." 1 Cor. 5: 3.—"I beseech you that I may not be bold when I *am present*," etc. 2 Cor. 10: 2.—"I told you before, and foretell you as if I *were present* the second time." 2 Cor. 13: 2.—"I desire *to be present* with you and to change my voice." Gal. 4: 20.—The word *parousia* is twice translated presence in our version. "His bodily *presence* is weak." 2 Cor. 10: 10.—As ye have always obeyed, not as in my *presence* only but now much more in my absence. Phil. 2: 12.—If the translators had been uniform in their renderings, they would used the same word in the following instances. "I am glad of the coming (the *presence*) of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus." 1 Cor. 16: 17. "God \* \* comforted us by the coming (*presence*) of Titus; and not by his coming (*presence*) only." 2 Cor. 7: 6-7. "That our rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again" (by my *presence* again with you). Phil. 1: 26.

The only remaining instances of its use in the New Testament are the following, in all which it refers to what is called Christ's second coming. "Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (in his *Presence*). 1 Cor. 15: 23.—"What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming" (before our Lord Jesus Christ in his *Presence*). 1 Thess. 2: 19.—"At the coming (in the *Presence*) of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." 1 Thess. 3: 13.—"We which are alive and remain unto the coming (the *Presence*) of the Lord.

1 Thess 4: 15.—Preserved blameless unto the coming (the *Presence*) of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Thess. 5: 23.—“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming (the *Presence*) of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Thess. 2: 1.—“And shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” (his *Presence*). 2 Thess. 2: 8.—“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming (the *Presence*) of the Lord. The coming (*Presence*) of the Lord draweth nigh.” Jas. 5: 7, 8.—“We made known to you the power and coming (*Presence*) of our Lord Jesus Christ.” 2 Pet. 1: 16.—“Where is the promise of his coming?” (*Presence*). 2 Pet. 3: 4.—“Looking for and hasting [unto] the coming (*Presence*) of the day of the Lord.” 2 Pet. 3: 12.—“We may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming” (in his *Presence*). 1 John 2: 28.

It is important to observe that in all the instances thus cited the word is accompanied in the original by the article *the*, which in Greek is distinctive and emphatic,—implying that it is, in some sense, a special and unique presence, to be distinguished from all others. Accordingly, we find that the term is never applied to his first advent, when he dwelt among men in the flesh. That was indeed a coming to men, a sojourn with them, but it is never called *The Parousia*. Nor is the word “second” ever joined to it, as if implying that there was a first. We often speak of the “second advent,” the “second coming,” etc., but the Scriptures never speak of a “second Parousia.” Whatever was to be its nature, it was something peculiar, having never occurred before, and being never

to occur again. It was to be a presence differing from and superior to all other manifestations of himself to men, so that its designation should properly stand by itself, without any qualifying epithet other than the article,—THE PRESENCE.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>This view of the meaning of the word is sustained by the most eminent scholars.

“Parousia; properly, the *being or becoming present*: i. e. (a) *presence*. 2 Cor. 10: 10—(b) *a coming, advent,—etc.*”—Lexicon, *sub voce*.—*Dr. Robinson*.

“Here again our translation misleads. Parousia means not coming; it means *presence*, being present, as is plain by referring to its root, *pareimi*, I am present. The taking of all these things so as to be *seen* is of itself complete proof of the presence (not ocularly visible presence, but presence in the scriptural sense) of Christ.” Bib. Sac. Vol. ~~xi~~, p. 455.—*Prof. M. Stuart*.

“The word Parousia (presence) is the ordinary expression for the second coming of the Lord.—With the classic authors parousia commonly signifies *presence*; it has the same meaning sometimes in the N. T., in the writings of Paul (2 Cor. 10: 10; Phil. 1: 26; 2: 12; 2 Thess. 2: 9); in other cases it is used in the sense of advent, and once (2 Pet. 1: 16) the incarnation of the Redeemer as applied to his first coming.” Vol. ii. p. 228.—*Olshausen*.

“Not the brightness of his coming, as very many commentators, and the English version, but the mere outburst of his *presence* shall bring the adversary to naught.” Compare 2 Thess. 2: 8.—*Alford*.

“The inquiry involves three questions. 1. When shall these (things) be, and what the sign when they shall happen? 2. And what the sign of thy *presence*?” Com. Matt. 24: 3.—*Dr. Hales*, quoted approvingly by *Bloomfield*.

“Porro quærunt, quodnam presentia Christi futurum esse signum?” (They ask what shall be the sign of Christ’s *presence*?) Com. Matt. 24: 3.—*Rosenmuller*.

“As Christ’s first sojourn with humanity was also an appearing, the future manifestation is often distinguished as his ‘glo-

From this view of the word it is evident, I think, that neither the English word "coming" nor the Latin "advent" is the best representative of the original. They do not conform to its etymology; they do not correspond to the idea of the verb from which it is derived; nor could they appropriately be substituted for the more exact word, "presence," in the cases where the translators used the latter. Nor is the radical idea of them the same. "Coming" and "advent" give most prominently the conception of an *approach* to us, motion *toward* us; "parousia" that of *being with* us, without reference to how it began. The force of the former ends with the arrival; that of the latter begins with it. Those are words of motion; this of rest. The space of time covered by the action of the former is limited, it may be momentary; that of the latter unlimited,—continuance that may be

rious' appearing, in contrast to the state of humiliation in which he first came to earth; or its *permanence* is emphasized in contrast with the shortness of his former visitation, for the word translated coming in the text just cited properly signifies *presence*." Hist. Ch. Theology, p. 190.—Dr. Reuss, Prof. in the Protestant Theo. Seminary in Strasburg.

"Jesus described this judgment on Jerusalem in the symbolic language of prophecy as connected with his (invisible) *presence*, and bade his disciples await his coming and recognize it in that event.—His *presence*, which he called in prophetic language a coming on the clouds of heaven, would consist in the manifestation of his divine interposition in human affairs as the exalted protector of his church.—This wicked one Christ will destroy, etc.,—i. e., he will execute judgment on this man of sin as he will also on Jerusalem; both alike will be the effect of his *presence* (parousia)."—First Age. Vol. II. pp. 71, 96.—Dr. Dollinger, Prof. of Eccl. History in the University of Munich.

eternal. So in respect to place; a coming implies an arrival at some locality; a presence may be universal, "wherever two or three are met." The promise of the Lord's coming to men, therefore, is not the same thing as a promise of his presence with them. The one implies nothing more, necessarily, than a single manifestation, a visit however short; the other implies a stay with them, relations of permanence; not the performance of a single act, but rather a dispensation including within it many acts, and covering a long period of duration, possibly eternal.

It may be thought that I make more of this distinction than is needful, but I am persuaded otherwise. Had our translators done with this technical word "parousia" as they did with "baptisma,"—transferring it unchanged,—or if translated using its exact etymological equivalent, *presence*, and had it been well understood, as it then would have been, that there is no such thing as a "second Presence," I believe that the entire doctrine would have been different from what it now is. The phrases, "second advent," and "second coming," would never have been heard of. The church would have been taught to speak of THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD, as that from which its hopes were to be realized, whether in the near future or at the remotest period,—that under which the world was to be made new, a resurrection both spiritual and corporeal should be attained, and justice and everlasting awards administered. There would have been no difficulty in conceiving that that Presence began to be near at the time when in the primitive age



it was expected, in that existing generation, and would continue long enough for everything to happen under it which prophecy connects with it. And even now, if we could get rid of the limiting and localizing ideas implied in a coming, and substitute for them the universal and eternal possibilities of a *presence*, I believe that nine-tenths of the difficulties attending the subject would disappear, and we should easily return to those simple views which made the *Parousia* to the apostles and primitive churches a perpetual spring of activity and hope and holy joy.

But we are anticipating. There are other terms which are not unfrequently applied in the New Testament to the same event, but not in the same distinctive way as the one we have considered. Such are ἀποκάλυψις, translated revelation in 1 Pet. 1: 13; appearing in 1 Pet. 1: 7; coming in 1 Cor. 1: 7:—ἐπιφάνεια, rendered appearing in 1 Tim. 6: 14; 2 Tim. 1: 10; 4: 1, 8; Titus 2: 13; and brightness in 2 Thess. 2: 8:—ἔλευσις, translated coming in Acts 7: 52. It is not necessary to dwell upon either of these, for they are used only incidentally and in an ordinary way which throws no special light upon the nature of the event itself. The great diversity of signification given them by the translators shows that they saw nothing technical or distinctive in them.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE NATURE OF THE PAROUSIA.

The work of salvation is represented in the Scriptures,—doubtless in condescension to our human conceptions,—as having been the object of consultation and covenant between the Persons of the Trinity, before the creation of the world. The Divine Logos, or Son, is said to have offered himself for its performance, consenting to the temporary relinquishment of his divine honors, and to the humiliations and sufferings involved in taking a human nature, living a human life, and dying an ignominious and most painful death, thereby making an atonement for sin which would render pardon possible. This offer the Father, as the representative of eternal law and justice, is said to have accepted, and in return for it to have given the world thus redeemed to the Son, to be in a peculiar sense his own, to be possessed, governed, and disposed of by him for its own salvation and the manifestation of his glory. “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death.” Isa. 53: 12. “I will give thee the heathen (the nations) for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” Ps. 2: 8. “There was given him dominion, and glory, and a

kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him." Dan. 7: 14. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor." Heb. 2: 9. "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Heb. 12: 2. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God<sup>a</sup> but made himself of no reputation (Gr. *ἑαυτὸν ἐξέλωσεν*, *emptied himself*), and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. *Wherefore* also God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name (i. e. a rank or dignity) which is above every name," etc. Phil. 2: 6-11. See also Matt. 11: 27; 28: 18; John 3: 35; 5: 27; 1 Cor. 15: 25-28; Eph. 1: 20-23.

This dignity—called often by a single term, his "glory,"—involved several functions which we usually consider as distinct. In our day we divide government into three departments, the legislative, judicial, and executive, but this is a device unknown in early times and absolute monarchies. The Hebrew kings sat on their thrones in the gates of their cities, and "executed judgment and justice" for their people. 2 Sam. 8: 15; 15: 2; 1 Kings 3: 9; Isa. 32: 1. In the Old Testament, God is everywhere styled both

<sup>a</sup> More exactly, "thought not his being equal with God a thing to be held fast." Alford translates it, "deemed not his equality with God a matter for grasping."

King and Judge, and the records of his will are termed interchangeably his laws, his statutes, and his judgments. "The verbs," says Hengstenberg, "which signify *to judge*, in the Shemitish languages have for the most part the secondary meaning to reign, because in ancient times both functions were usually confined to one person."<sup>a</sup> Thus *Christ the King*, according to Scripture usage, signifies also *Christ the Judge*, the two supreme offices being conjointly and inseparably exercised by him in his administration over this world. See also Isa. 11: 4, 5; 42: 4; John 5: 22, 26, 27; Matt. 25: 31-46.

In addition to these and transcending all the functions of an earthly monarch, our Lord in his kingdom was to have the prerogative of *giving life to the dead*. His kingdom was to extend over a realm of moral death—a domain of souls "dead in trespasses and sins." Their entrance into it was to be by a new birth, called variously a "re-generation," a "new creation," a "resurrection from the dead," etc. John 1: 12, 13; 3: 3; Rom. 6: 4-11; Eph. 2: 5. This new life should pervade the whole nature of man, the physical as well as spiritual. Redemption was to be co-extensive with the fall; the resurrection the complement of regeneration. "I am," said Christ, "the Resurrection and the life." John 11: 25. When his work of grace should be completed, man would stand restored in all the elements of his nature, "delivered from the bondage, of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Rom. 8: 21.

<sup>a</sup> Christology of the O. T., I. p. 295.

The supreme dignity of our glorified Lord, then, was to involve the threefold offices of King, Life-giver, and Judge. Their administration, further, was to be unique in this, that they were to be a government of *grace*, having in it the special provision of pardon for the guilty, which feature we designate by the term *mediatorial*,—accomplishing thus what else would be impossible, the harmonizing of equity with pardon, enabling God to “be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.”

This recital of the familiar truths involved in the revealed Plan of Redemption will, if I mistake not, lead us to the true idea of the Parousia. *It is the presence of Christ in this world in the exercise of his mediatorial offices.* In this view, it is the complement and the contrast of the first advent, when he came in the flesh. It is for the completion of the work which he then began. It is for the harvesting of the seed then sown. Matt. 13 : 37–43. The former, according to the nature of its work, was temporary ;<sup>a</sup> this is to be permanent. That was associated with memories of sorrow, humiliation, and death ; this with the promise of perpetuity, and glory, and blessedness. The one was a day of “visitation” to men (Luke 19 : 44) ; the other of “abode” with them. John 14 : 23. What better term for such an abode could be devised than one which includes all the ideas of grace and joy involved

<sup>a</sup>The phrase in Heb. 2 : 7, 9, “made a little lower than the angels,” should undoubtedly read “made lower than the angels for a little while.” Most authorities agree in this, though Alford dissents. See his note on the passage.



in the exercise of his great offices, the *Parousia*,—a blessed and eternal PRESENCE with them?

This Presence, it may be remarked further, I understand to be a *literal* one. The expression “Christ’s literal presence, or coming” is often taken as meaning nothing less than a *material and visible* one, so that the denial of such a coming is thought to be a rejection of the doctrine of his literal coming. This is wholly unwarranted. It might as well be said that to deny that God is a material and visible being is to deny his literal existence. The *Parousia* is a literal presence, as truly as when Christ says, “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there *am I* in the midst of them.” It is not a figurative one, not one existing constructively or as an object of thought, but a true, actual presence, as real, though not under the same conditions, as when he was here in the flesh.

It is also a *personal* presence. The same unwarranted restriction of meaning is often given to this phrase, as if Christ could not be personally present unless subject to the senses of sight and touch. How often after his resurrection did he render himself invisible to his disciples while he was with them. By a personal presence I mean that Christ is here himself in *propria persona*, not merely by the official work of the Spirit, nor by any representative whatever.

Whether, in point of fact, that Presence ever will be a visible one with a visible initiation or “coming” and an external sensuous kingdom, is, at this stage of the discussion, premature to inquire. What I have said is sufficient to show that that question is not one

that at all involves its essential nature, the time of its occurrence, or the purposes for which it was appointed.

The view we have thus gained of the nature of the Parousia suggests to us also what is meant by Christ's *coming*. For though, as already remarked, this noun, ἐλευσις, (coming) is used but once in the N. T. (Acts 7: 52), and that not in reference to his *second* coming, yet the verb to come (ερχομαι, ἔρχω) is very frequently employed in that signification. But we are to remember that this is the coming of a *divine being*, who already possesses omnipresence, and cannot therefore be said to *come* and *go* in the same sense as when applied to finite creatures. It is an instance of that anthropomorphism which is every where used in the Scriptures, and without which it would be impossible to form any conception of God or of his acts.

That omnipresence, as a personal attribute, belongs to Christ will not be questioned by any who believe in his deity. Even when dwelling among men in his flesh he could say, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Nay, he directly affirmed that at the same moment when he was visibly present, talking with those about him, he was also in heaven. "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, who is in heaven." John 3: 13. Much more, then, may it be affirmed that in his glorified state he possesses this prerogative of deity, and can no more come in the sense of a literal *approach* than he can depart, leaving some portion of the universe empty of his divine essence.

The only conceivable sense, then, in which Christ, in his divine offices of King, Life-giver, and Judge, can come to men, is that of *manifestation*. God came down on Mt. Sinai when the phenomena of the cloud, the thunder, and the earthquake appeared there which *manifested* his presence. "In Scripture language," says Stuart, "God comes whenever he proceeds to do or execute any purpose of his will in respect to man. —But we are never authorized to suppose an actual and *visible coming*, except by symbols. God is always and everywhere present, and cannot come and go in the literal sense." Bib. Sac. IX. p. 340-1. See Gen. 11: 5; 18: 21; Ex. 3: 8; Numb. 12: 5; 22: 9; Ps. 68: 7; Isa. 64: 3. So says John, "Christ *came* by water and blood" (1 John 5: 6); that is, he was *manifested* as a Saviour to men by the water and blood which issued from his heart when pierced by the soldier's spear.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> "Christ said to the Jewish rulers, at his condemnation, that hereafter they would see the Son of man come in the fullness of his divine power. Thus his presence, which he called in prophetic language 'a coming on the clouds of heaven,' would consist in the *manifestation* of his divine interposition in human affairs, as the exalted Protector of his church. This they would behold, of course, only with the eye of faith, for he had already told them they would then first see or recognize him when they acknowledged and honored him as Messiah."—*Dollinger*. First Age of the Church, Vol. II. p. 71.

"Christ is said to come whenever he *makes manifest* his glory as King of the Kingdom of God, in enhanced splendor before the eyes of all. This he did, in its initial stage, during his life on earth, but yet much more after his exaltation to heaven, in the destruction of Jerusalem, for example, in the fall of heathendom, and in the reformation of the church; and it is the task

It follows from this that, while we are permitted to conceive and to speak of but one Parousia of Christ, there may be *many* comings. These are to be regarded as *specific* events under a *generic* dispensation. Several are so designated in the Scriptures, and many more might equally well be. Among them were the Spirit's work on the day of pentecost, the judgment upon Ananias and Sapphira, the conversion of Saul, the various deliverances of the apostles from prison, the overthrow of Jerusalem, the destruction of the man of sin, the conversion of Constantine, etc., and generally, the happy death of believers, the conquests in the work of missions, revivals, etc.<sup>a</sup>

of an exact exegesis to determine with regard to every place in the N. T. (where this is demanded) in what sense precisely *there* a coming of the Lord is spoken of."—*Van Oosterzee*, Vol. II. p. 578.

<sup>a</sup> In this view, it was exactly in the spirit of the old Hebrew diction that Mrs. Howe, in her "Battle Hymn of the Republic," referring to the uprising of the nation to put down rebellion and slavery, wrote:

"Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord,  
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are  
stored,

He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword;  
His truth is marching on.

"I have seen him in the watchfires of a hundred circling  
camps;

They have builded him an altar in the evening dews and  
damps;

I can read his righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;  
His day is marching on."

## CHAPTER III.

### THE TIME OF THE PAROUSIA.

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#### SECTION I.

##### TESTIMONY OF CHRIST.

The first of the inquiries addressed by the disciples to our Lord on the Mount of Olives, respecting his promised Parousia was as to the time of its occurrence. "Tell us *when* shall these things be?" Matt. 24: 3. His answer is very full and explicit. Indeed, it may be said that on no subject whatever is the language of the New Testament more abundant or more decisive.

1. Its *precise* date was not to be revealed, nay was unknown even to himself. "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Mark 13: 32. The exact moment was not among the things committed to him to be disclosed to men. While here in the flesh, his own divine attributes of omniscience and almighty power which, as the eternal Son of God, he had equally with the Father, were in a state of abeyance. He had "emptied himself" (Greek, *ἐκένωσεν*, Phil. 2: 7.) and taken the form of a servant,—acting and speaking in that state of humiliation only through the Spirit (Matt. 12: 28; Acts 1: 2; Heb. 9: 14), as it was given to him by his Father. John 3: 34; 5: 19, 30; 8: 28; 12: 49.

But this language should not be pressed to convey a meaning not warranted by it. It is very often cited as showing that *nothing* was intended to be known as to the time, and therefore as reproving all those who repeat the inquiry of the apostles. Dr. Hodge referring to it says, "Neither the early Christians nor the apostles knew when the second advent of Christ was to take place." Com. on Rom. 13: 11. And Dean Alford: "The time of his own coming was hidden from all created beings, nay, in the mystery of his mediatorial office, from the Son himself." I submit that this is altogether too sweeping an assertion. In the very verse next preceding he had told the disciples when it should be with sufficient definiteness for all practical purposes,—sufficient to incite them to watchfulness and preparation for it; and he here only forestalls an idle curiosity as to the exact *day and hour*, which, if disclosed, would tend to interfere with the duties of that time. In a similar manner, after his resurrection, he refused to answer their inquiry whether the time had arrived in which he would restore the kingdom to Israel, saying, "It is not for you to know the times and seasons" <sup>a</sup>—i. e. the precise dates, "which the Father hath put in his own power." Acts 2: 7.

2. But though the exact day and hour were not to be stated, he still assures them that the event was *very near*. This declaration was made in many ways, and

<sup>a</sup> "As Meyer observes. *kairos* (translated seasons) is always a definite, limited space of time, and involves the idea of transitoriness." Alford. See also Tittman's N. T. Synonymes.



repeated with emphasis, and many solemn admonitions that it should be remembered and watched for, making it one of the most certain and impressive teachings in the New Testament.

The very first public utterance that he made, after entering upon his ministry of preaching, was to repeat the announcement of his forerunner, John, in the wilderness, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." Matt. 4: 17. The coming of that kingdom was the same thing as the coming of its king. So when giving his twelve apostles their commission, he says, "As ye go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'" Matt. 10: 7. He adds, (ver. 23) "Verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come."

Matt. 16: 27, 28. "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works. Verily, I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." In the corresponding passage in Mark it is, "till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." And in Luke, "till they see the kingdom of God." It has been maintained by some that this prediction was fulfilled in the transfiguration, which occurred six days afterward. But this is a most unnatural explanation. The purpose of it was to comfort his disciples under his announcement that he was about to be put to death, and their expectations of honor and place in his kingdom to be disappointed; —that they must deny themselves and take up the

cross, as he had done, and be willing to lose life itself if they would preserve it. Yet he would not have them discouraged, for their Lord would, after his death, speedily return in the glory of his new kingdom, which would thenceforth be established in power. He would then be invested with the office of administering judgment and reward, and would repay his faithful servants for all they had done and suffered for his sake. Such is the manifest import of this grand promise, with which nothing can be more incongruous than the idea that they should be permitted merely to witness a change in his personal appearance, which would continue but an hour or two, and which they must be careful not to tell of. How absurd to call this a *rewarding* of every man according to his works! Besides, it seems little short of trifling to pretend that our Lord should so solemnly, and with the formula of weightiest emphasis, declare that there were some among all the persons standing about him who would not die within a week!<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> "This declaration refers in its full meaning, certainly *not to the transfiguration* which follows, for that could in no sense (except that of being a foretaste; cf. Peter's own allusion to it. 2 Pet. 1: 17. where he evidently treats it as such) be named the Son of man coming in his kingdom; and the expression 'Some of them shall not taste of death' indicates a distant event, —but to the *destruction of Jerusalem* and the full manifestation of the kingdom of Christ by the annihilation of the Jewish polity." *Alford*.

"It has reference to a gradual or progressive change, the institution of Christ's kingdom in the hearts of men and in society at large, of which protracted process the two salient points are the effusion of the Spirit on the day of pentecost and the destruction of Jerusalem more than a quarter of a century later." *Alexander*.

John 21 : 21, 22. "Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" This is not, indeed, an express declaration that John should live till the time of his coming, but that meaning is implied in it.<sup>a</sup> The other apostles so understood it, and the prediction in this sense was verified, John, according to the testimony of all antiquity, having survived the destruction of Jerusalem. Euseb. Eccl. Hist. iii. 23.

Matt. 24 : 34. "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." It has been said that the word "generation" does not necessarily denote a period equivalent to the average duration of those living at one time, but that it sometimes signifies a *race* or *kind*; so that the meaning here may be that, notwithstanding the threatened overthrow of the nation, the Jewish race should survive and continue till the end of time. But this is foreign to the whole scope of the passage. The topic under consideration was the time of the Parousia. Jesus likens it to the near approach of the summer after the budding of the spring, and immediately adds the words before us, as if to reiterate the idea in the strongest terms. Besides, though the English word, generation, may sometimes have the sense claimed, there is no instance in the New Testament of such use of the original word, γενεά. It

<sup>a</sup> "The words must be accepted as expressing not merely what he could do, but what he intended to do." *Archbishop Trench, Studies*, p. 189.

occurs forty-two times, and invariably in its ordinary sense of the men of this age, or those now living.<sup>a</sup>

Matt. 26: 65. "Hereafter" (Gr. from this time) "shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven."—— Luke 22: 69. "Hereafter" (Gr. from now) "shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God." In these passages the qualifying phrases of time are very explicit, not signifying, as the English "hereafter," some indefinite period in the future, but one commencing at that very moment;—immediately, forthwith.

<sup>a</sup>"Notwithstanding the dissent of some, the phrase can only mean 'this very generation,' 'the race of men now living.'" *Bloomfield.*

"Ejus ætatis homines." *Rosenmuller.*

"It is neither more nor less than equivalent to our mode of expression when we say, 'There are those now born who will live to see these things fulfilled.'" *Robinson. Bib. Sac.*

"'Not,' says De Wette, 'this generation of the Jews, not this generation of the apostles (Paulus), but exclusively, the generation of men now living.' His explanation is doubtless correct." *Stuart, Bib. Sac. IX. p. 455.*

"Unless we forge a meaning for the word in this place which is not only unexampled elsewhere, but directly contradictory to its essential meaning everywhere, we must understand our Lord as saying that the contemporary race or generation, i. e. those then living, should not pass away till all these prophecies should be accomplished." *J. A. Alexander.*

"We can understand nothing else by 'this generation' than the contemporaries of Jesus and his disciples." *Keil.*

"This generation of living men." *Geikie.*

"*Genea* (generation) is not used in the sense of nation in any one passage, either in the New Testament or of profane writers." *Olshausen.*

"The generation of persons then living with Christ." *Denham in Bib. Cyc.*

John 16: 16. "A little while and ye shall not see me, and again a little while and ye shall see me; because I go unto the Father." This and similar phrases in the discourse can only have one import, as Alford terms it, "the great *Revisitation* in all its blessed progress."

These declarations of our Lord were accompanied by the most solemn warnings to his disciples to be continually prepared and watching for his coming, for it would take place suddenly and, to those not thus watching, unexpectedly. Matt. 24: 42-45; Mark 13: 33; Luke 21: 34-36. Of like import are the parables of the servant left in charge of a household (Matt. 24: 45-51); of the ten virgins (Matt. 25: 1-13); and of the talents (Matt. 25: 14-29). It seems to us little else than mockery to address such admonitions to those who, upon the theory that the Parousia is still future, would have gone to their graves at least twenty centuries before the prediction would be accomplished.

## SECTION II.

### TESTIMONY OF THE FOUR DISCIPLES.

Such were the teachings of the Master himself. If now we turn to the apostles whom he commissioned to complete the sacred volume, we find as one of the most conspicuous facts that they had understood him as affirming the near approach of the Parousia; that they frequently spoke of it, and derived from it their most constant incitements to fidelity, and their most precious consolations and hopes.

Three of those who inquired concerning it on the

Mount of Olives were James, Peter, and John, and these, with Jude, are the only ones of the twelve whose words have been preserved to us in writing. A simple citation of their language will strikingly illustrate how habitually and how fondly they recurred to the subject.

## JAMES.

Jas. 5: 7, 8, 9. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming (Parousia) of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth, etc.; be ye also patient, for the coming (Parousia) of the Lord draweth nigh. —Behold the Judge standeth before the door."

## PETER.

1 Pet. 1: 5. "Who are kept by the power of God unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time," (about to be disclosed).

1 Pet. 1: 7. "That the trial of your faith—might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing (*ἀποκάλυψις*) of Jesus Christ."

1 Pet. 1: 13. "Be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you." (Alford says the original "expresses the near impending of the event spoken of; q. d.; 'which is even now bearing down on you.'") at the appearing (*ἀποκάλυψις*) of Jesus Christ."

1 Pet. 4: 5. "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead."

1 Pet. 4: 7. "But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer."

1 Pet. 4: 13. "That when his glory shall be re-



vealed (Gr. in the *apocalypsis* of his glory) ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."

1 Pet. 4: 17. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God." (Gr. it is the time of the beginning of the judgment).

1 Pet. 5: 1. "A partaker of the glory that shall be (Gr. is about to be) revealed."

1 Pet. 5: 4. "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

2 Pet. 1: 16. "We made known to you the power and coming (Parousia) of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Pet. 3: 10-12. "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night—Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting [unto] the coming (Parousia) of the day of God," etc.

#### JOHN.

1 John 2: 18. "It is the last time." Alford says, "Verse 28 shows that it is the coming of the Lord which is before the mind of the apostle."

1 John 2: 28. "Abide in him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming." (Gr. in his Parousia).

1 John 3: 2. We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

Rev. 1: 13. "Things which must shortly come to pass.—The time is at hand."

Rev. 2: 5, 16. "I will come unto thee quickly."

Rev. 2: 55. "Hold fast till I come."

Rev. 3: 3, 20. "I will come on thee as a thief.—Behold I stand at the door."

Rev. 22: 12. Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me."

#### JUDE.

Verse. 14. "Enoch prophesied saying, The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints." Vs. 24. "Unto him that is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory," etc.

#### SECTION III.

##### TESTIMONY OF PAUL.

In citing the abundant testimony of this great apostle, who, though not with the others who heard our Lord's words on the Mount of Olives, yet received the gospel which he preached by direct revelation (Gal. 1: 12), we begin with the earliest of his epistles,—1 Thessalonians,—which should be read in connection with Acts 17: 1-10, as showing the circumstances attending the founding of the Thessalonian church. The great theme of his preaching there had been the speedy coming of Christ to establish his kingdom among men. This appears from the complaint made by his enemies to the Roman authorities, that he and his followers were turning the world upside down—"saying that there is *another King*—one Jesus." With this agrees his own statement,—1 Thess. 1: 9, 10. "Macedonia and Achaia \* \* shew

of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to *wait for his Son from heaven.*" That Jesus was the appointed King of men and that he was about to come from heaven to assume his throne are plainly the leading topics thus indicated. We do not wonder that with backs yet bleeding from the scourging they had suffered at Philippi, Paul and his companion Silas should have taught thus. They made Christ's own words in Matt. 16: 24-28 their text, and their preaching, as he says, and as it well might be from an eloquence so fired and so illustrated, "was in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." Ch. 1: 5. From the seed sown in that three weeks' ministry sprang up a church whose faith and zeal won from him the most honorable commendation, and was, as he assures them, known and certified to throughout all Greece. Ch. 1: 8.<sup>a</sup>

With this key-note of his preaching harmonize all the allusions to the same subject with which the two epistles to this church abound.

1 Thess. 2: 19. "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (his Parousia).

<sup>a</sup> "The great burden of his message to them was the approaching coming and kingdom of the Lord Jesus."—*Alford*. "If we were asked for the distinguishing characteristic of the first Christians of Thessalonica, we should point to their overwhelming sense of the nearness of the second advent."—*Howson*. Life and Epp. I. p. 327.

1 Thess. 3: 13. "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming (Parousia) of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

1 Thess. 4: 15. "We which are alive and remain unto the coming (Parousia) of the Lord."<sup>a</sup>

1 Thess. 4: 17. "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds," etc.<sup>b</sup>

1 Thess. 5: 2. "Yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night."

1 Thess. 5: 23. "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming (Parousia) of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Thess. 1: 7. "And to you who are troubled rest

<sup>a</sup>"Then beyond question he himself expected to be alive, together with the majority of those to whom he was writing, at the Lord's coming."—*Alford*. This author styles the usual explanation that by "we, the living," is meant "such as should be alive at that day," an evasion, and insists that in the word *we*, "Paul includes his readers and himself. That this *was* his expectation we know from other passages, especially from 2 Cor. 5: 1-10."—"Certainly the proceeding of the older interpreters who thought Paul spoke in the plural only conversationally, without really meaning to say that they themselves, *he and his readers*, might be still living at the occurrence of that catastrophe, is decidedly to be rejected."—*Olshausen*.

<sup>b</sup>Here Paul evidently reckons himself among those of whom he considers it possible, and a thing to be desired and hoped for, that they may live to witness the advent. The strange evasions by means of which the fathers and others sought to make out that Paul nevertheless is not speaking of himself, are justly set aside by *Lunemann*."—*Auberlen*, in *Lange's Com.*

with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven," etc. (Gr. in the *apocalypsis* of the Lord Jesus from heaven).

2 Thess. 2: 1-12. This passage, so often quoted to disprove the speedy coming of Christ, will receive distinct notice hereafter.

2 Thess. 3: 5. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

The other epistles of Paul we note in their usual order.

Rom. 8: 18. "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Gr. is about to be revealed).

Rom. 13: 11-12. "And that knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent; the day is at hand."<sup>a</sup>

1 Cor. 1: 7-8. "Ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be

<sup>a</sup> "A fair exegesis of this passage can hardly fail to recognize the fact that the apostle here as well as elsewhere (1 Thess. 4: 17; 1 Cor. 15: 51), speaks of the coming of the Lord as rapidly approaching."—*Alford*. "Most modern German commentators defend this reference. Olshausen, DeWette, Philippi, Meyer, and others, think no other view in the least tenable; and Dr. Lange, while careful to guard against extreme theories on this point, denies the reference to eternal blessedness, and admits that the Parousia is intended. The opinion gains ground among Anglo-Saxon exegetes."—*Riddle*, in Lange's Com.

blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ." The meaning is that the Corinthians were not inferior to any other church in their ardent and waiting expectation of the approaching Parousia.<sup>a</sup>

1 Cor. 3: 13. "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire." Literally, "It—the day—is being manifested in fire." The verb is in the present tense, as if denoting an event now in progress or just about to occur.

1 Cor. 4: 5. "Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." An apparent allusion to the work of the Revealer predicted in Malachi 3: 2–5.

1 Cor. 5: 5. "Deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

1 Cor. 7: 29. "But this I say, brethren, the time is short; it remaineth," etc.<sup>b</sup>

1 Cor. 11: 26. "For as often as ye eat this bread

<sup>a</sup> "It may be asked, Were the Corinthians looking for Christ's second advent as an event likely to occur in their day, and which some of them might be expected to witness? This question must be answered in the affirmative."—*Poor*, in Lange's Com.

<sup>b</sup> Alford translates this, "The time that remains is short,—literally the 'time is shortened henceforth'; i. e. the interval between now and the coming of the Lord has arrived at an extremely contracted period."—"The 'time' is not to be taken for the earthly lifetime of individuals; the context rather points to the period of time from thence onward until the second advent."—*Kling*, in Lange's Com.



and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." This passage is relied upon by many as showing that the Parousia is still future, else our practice of observing the Supper should cease. This will be considered hereafter.<sup>a</sup>

1 Cor. 15: 23. Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." (Gr. in his Parousia).

1 Cor. 15: 51, 52. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound," etc.<sup>b</sup>

1 Cor. 16: 22. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be anathema. Maran atha." i. e. the Lord cometh.<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> "The showing forth is addressed directly to the Corinthians, not to them and all succeeding Christians; the apostle regarding the coming of the Lord as near at hand, in *his own time*."—*Alford*.

<sup>b</sup> "We all, viz., as in 1 Thess. 4: 15, who are alive and remain unto the Parousia of the Lord, in which number the apostle firmly believed that he himself should be."—*Alford*. "To take the term 'we' as a sort of generalization by which he did not intend literally to denote himself and his contemporaries, but only those living at the time of the advent, and who belonged to an entirely different period, and so, as equivalent to 'we Christians,' i. e. those who shall then be alive, is entirely arbitrary. It is unquestionable that the apostle, although opposed to all fanciful expectations and designations of time, regarded the second advent as near, and hoped to survive it."—*Kling*.

<sup>c</sup> "The thought, 'The Lord comes!' is calculated to heighten the force of the preceding thought; Be ye quickly converted, for the time of decision is near at hand!"—*Olshausen*.

Phil. 1: 6. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."<sup>a</sup>

Phil. 2: 16. "That I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain."

Phil. 3: 20. "Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>b</sup>

Phil. 4: 5. "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand."

Col. 3: 4. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

1 Tim. 6: 14. "Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable until the appearing (*epiphaneia*) of our Lord Jesus Christ."

2 Tim. 4: 1. "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall (Gr. is about to) judge the quick and the dead at his appearing (*epiphaneia*) and his kingdom."

2 Tim. 4: 8. "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

2 Tim. 4: 18. "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom."

Titus 2: 13. "Looking for that blessed hope, and

<sup>a</sup> "This assumes the nearness of the coming of the Lord."  
—*Alford*.

<sup>b</sup> "The words assume, as St. Paul always does when speaking incidentally, the 'we' surviving to witness the coming of the Lord."—*Alford*.

the glorious appearing (*epiphaneia*) of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Heb. 9: 28. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear (Gr. be seen), the second time, without sin unto salvation."

Heb. 10: 25. "And so much the more as ye see the day<sup>a</sup> approaching."

Heb. 10: 37. "For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." The expression in the original is very peculiar. The words translated "a little while," are a sort of double superlative, denoting the *smallest possible* time. Alford translates them a "little little while." He thinks that Paul had in his mind a similar expression in the Septuagint of Isa. 26: 20, which in our version is rendered "for a little moment." Nothing could express more forcibly the idea of the speediness of the event referred to. Yet, as if that were not enough, the same thing is repeated in the negative form,— "and will not tarry."

#### SECTION IV.

##### THE TESTIMONY WEIGHED.

I have thus cited or referred to above seventy instances in which our Lord and his apostles spoke directly or indirectly of the time of that great period named the Parousia. The casual reader, not familiar with the customary phraseology of the apostolic age, may not have always recognized the allusion to that

<sup>a</sup> "The shortest of all designations of the Lord's coming."—*Alford*.

period, but a careful study of the passages will not leave any doubt on that point. What now is the conclusion to which they bring us?

1. Let it be noted that in none of these passages, nor in any other of either Testament, is there any affirmation that the Parousia was *distant*. Nearly two thousand years have passed since that time, and if the Parousia is still future, it must then have been far off,—how much more than two thousand years we cannot say. Is it not remarkable that, if this were so, no intimation of that fact should at any time have been made? Is it not wonderful that among at least fourscore allusions to the event, and the time when it was expected, not one of them should have hinted at the *truth*,—if such *was* the truth? Is it not passing strange that in stating their expectations and hopes, and urging the powerful motives which centered in that event, not one should have uttered a word, or betrayed the trace of an impression in his mind, that the time was more than twenty centuries distant? Nay, take this assumed fact—say of twenty centuries—and carry it back and lay it along side the utterances quoted, as a supposed explanation of what their authors meant:—“at hand,” “before some standing here taste of death,” “this generation,” “from now,” “quickly,” “the time is short,” “we who are alive and remain unto it,” “a little little while,” etc. Is *that*, I cannot help asking, a proper way of understanding inspired words? I need not ask the learned only; I appeal to every plain man of common sense. Do these phrases mean twenty centuries or more? *Can* they mean that

by any reasonable interpretation? Had we been among the hearers of our Lord or the apostles, could we have possibly understood their words in such a meaning?

2. The testimonies I have considered are, most of them, expressed in *simple, plain words*. They are not clothed in figurative language or presented only through pictures and symbols, like many others used in prophecy. "Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the Son of man be come." "Some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." "The Parousia of the Lord draweth nigh." "I come quickly." "The Lord is at hand." "In a little little while, he that shall come will come and will not tarry," etc. Nothing can be more direct, literal, positive. Mathematical terms are not less ambiguous. Says Prof. Reuss, "All these representations are clear and simple; they have nothing equivocal about them; there is not a word to suggest that there is any hidden meaning, any mental reservation, reducing their value merely to that of parable or figure. It is evident that the narrators, who serve as our guides, took every word literally, and had not a shadow of doubt in reference to the matter." *Hist. Ch. Theology*, p. 214. Why then should we not receive them in the same way?

3. It is certain that those who heard the words of our Lord on the subject *understood him as teaching the near approach of the Parousia*; that they themselves expected it; and of course that when they referred to it they meant to be understood in the same way. This is now conceded by nearly all commenta-



tors. The following statements may be added to those already cited in connection with the particular passages. Says Prof. Stuart, "Tholuck and most of the late commentators in Germany suppose that the apostles expected the speedy advent upon earth a second time." Com. on Rom. 13: 11. "The Messianic kingdom begins by means of the second coming of Christ, which Paul regarded near." *Meyer*. "All the writers of the New Testament consider Christ's advent as near; in fact the whole doctrine would not have the slightest practical significance unless the longing after the second coming of Christ were each moment alive, and therefore continually deemed possible." *Olshausen*, on 1 Thess. 4: 15.—"That St. John, like the other apostles, expected the coming of Christ as nigh at hand is a certain fact." *Ebrard*, on 1 John. "All the apostolic exhortations and consolations are so clearly connected with the prospect of the personal return of the Lord, that whosoever contradicts this last thereby takes away the roof and cornice from the structure of the apostolic theology." *Van Oosterzee*. Hist. II. p. 581, "Certainly the apostles do all of them express often enough the expectation of the coming as near,—a living hope and longing expectation." *Auberlen* in Lange's Com. 1 Thess. 4: 17.—There can be but one reasonable conclusion from these facts. For the apostles were *inspired* men, expressly commissioned to teach what they had received from the Lord. The language I have cited from them was written under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, who was promised to

“teach them all things, and bring all things to their remembrance whatsoever he had said unto them.” John 14 : 26. If they, so taught and so guided, understood that the Parousia was at hand, then we must so understand it, or relinquish the belief of their inspiration altogether.

It is curious, though not pleasant, to observe by what methods those who deny that the Parousia has taken place endeavor to escape this conclusion. Whenever these passages are approached, the first thing is to concede that in *words* they teach that doctrine. The *language* is sufficiently plain and explicit. Instead, however of accepting their obvious meaning, and making less clearly taught truths conform to this, they begin to look around for some way to avoid its force. Some boldly say the apostles were *mistaken*. Thus Mr. Barnes : “I do not know that the proper doctrine of inspiration suffers if we admit that the apostles were ignorant of the exact time when the world would close, or even that in regard to the precise period when that would take place *they might be in error*.” Com. on 1 Cor. 15 : 51. *Inspired* men in error ! And that not about matters outside of religion, but about the very things they were commissioned to teach, and which they made the very “roof and cornice” of their theology ! We cannot conceive of it. The suggestion shocks all our ideas of inspiration and of the infallibility of the divine Word. Rather would we say with Stuart : “It is incredible that the apostles, if enlightened by supernatural influence, should not have been taught better

than to lead the whole Christian church to a vain and false hope about the appearance of Christ, which when frustrated by time and experience would lead of course to general distrust in all their experiences and hopes." Com. on Rom. 13: 11.—And then, what of the Lord himself? Was *He* in error also?

Not a few writers, hesitating apparently to say outright that Paul was mistaken, seek to weaken the force of his statements by intimating that they are found chiefly in his *earlier epistles*, as if the growing wisdom of his later years had corrected, or at least abated, the fondness of his former expectations. Says *Olshausen*, "Paul seems in later times not only to give up the hope of living to see Christ's second coming himself (compare Phil. 1: 23 with 1 Thess. 4: 16, 17), but also to have dwelt less in his teaching on the near approach of the outward kingdom of God, and to have presented in stronger relief its spiritual aspects." So *Alford*: "I find in the course of St. Paul's epistles that expressions which occur in the earlier ones, and seem to indicate expectations of his almost immediate coming, are gradually modified, disappear altogether from the epistles of the imprisonment, and instead of them are found others speaking in a very different strain of dissolving and being with Christ, and passing through death and the resurrection in the latest epistles." Proleg. 1 Thess. Granting this, what then? Was not Paul as truly inspired when he wrote the earlier as the later epistles? He must have been over fifty years old when the very first—1 Thess.—was written; he had been preaching

the gospel nearly or quite twenty years; shall his words be discredited because of either youth or inexperience? Are not the epistles to the Thessalonians as much the word of God as that to the Philippians? Even if he had said less of the Parousia in his later than in the earlier years, does it follow that it was because his opinion was different? I have suggested a special reason why he made the subject so prominent at Thessalonica, and that is enough to account fully for any such supposed difference between these and the later epistles. Besides, I question not only the hypothesis but the alleged fact itself. If Paul's imprisonment was in A. D. 62-65 then the later epistles were those addressed to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, and latest of all to Timothy and Titus. But where in all his writings are there stronger expressions of his hope and expectation than in Phil. 4: 5; Col. 3: 4; 2 Tim. 4: 1, 8, 18; Titus 2 13? Equally decided are the passages quoted from the Hebrews, though both Alford and Olshausen doubt the Pauline authorship of that epistle.

More reprehensible even than these is the opinion avowed by Olshausen that our Lord *purposely* used language calculated to mislead his hearers, for the sake of the moral effect to be thus gained. The Parousia, though not to occur for more than sixty generations, "in its great leading events is immediately associated with the present, and thus great impressiveness is given to the entire portraiture *without its treading too closely upon the truth.*"—"Had the Redeemer intended to say that his coming was yet very distant"—which ac-

cording to this author's view was the exact truth,—“such a statement would have entirely destroyed the ethical import of the prophecy, viz., the incitement to watchfulness which it was designed to produce; and if, on the other hand, he had so expressed himself as to say nothing at all about the time when these things would come to pass, this total silence would have been no less paralyzing in its influence. But the representation given by the Lord was so framed as to act in a two-fold way, first, to keep before the mind the constant possibility of his coming, and secondly, to show the impossibility of fixing upon a precise period.” Com. on Matt. 24: 36. That is to say, neither silence nor the exact truth would have had the best “ethical influence;” so our Lord purposely used ambiguous and misleading words for the sake of inciting his disciples to watchfulness! What, I cannot help asking, must be the straits of a theory which makes necessary so shocking an invention as this!

Schott, Bloomfield, and others seek to solve the difficulty by “a middle course,” supposing that Paul did not intend to teach that the near approach of the Parousia was *certain*, but only *possible*. “By speaking obscurely, he doubtless meant to express no certain expectation on the subject; for though he was himself inclined to think that some then alive should witness the coming of Christ, or at least, that it was not far distant, yet he was well aware that it was not permitted to him to know the times and the seasons which the Father had reserved to himself; so we find that he sometimes refutes those who expected the Lord's



return to be close at hand and gladly anticipated it. And as the apostle at the time when he wrote this epistle was not yet advanced in life, he might very well entertain the opinion that he should *perhaps* live to see that day." Bloomfield. 1 Thess. 4: 15.—Surely this is to empty the solemn admonitory words of Paul of half their meaning. The Parousia only *may* be near; which implies, of course, that it may *not*. The "ethical" benefit of the expectation may be gained, and at the same time his credit as a prophet will be saved if it turns out to be a mistake! Does the Holy Spirit guide men into such double dealing as that? Besides, is this a true representation of the facts? *Does* Paul speak "obscurely"? Does he intend to affirm a bare *possibility*? Let the reader glance again over the passages I have cited, and point if he can to one which betrays the slightest doubt. On the contrary, language could not be more forcible in urging upon his readers the absolute certainty of the great event foretold, and their duty to "stand fast, and hold the traditions they had received" from him; while his fervent prayer was that the Lord would "direct their hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ." And I add, as before, even if the apostles did deem it only "possible," was the same thing true of Christ himself? Are his words, prefaced so often with his "verily, verily," *uncertain*?

But the most common and perhaps plausible method of escaping from the obvious language of our Lord and his apostles is by resorting to the theory of a *double sense*. These prophetic utterances, it is said,

had two meanings; first, the apparent one which was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem; and secondly, within and beyond this, a higher one, which awaits fulfillment at the end of the world. This is what Dean Alford calls "the pregnant meaning of prophecy," and which he applies to our Lord's great discourse in Matt. 24th and 25th as follows:—" *Two parallel interpretations* run through the former part as far as verse 28; the destruction of Jerusalem, and the final judgment being both enwrapped in the words, but the former, in this part of the chapter, predominating. Even in this part, however, we cannot tell how applicable the warnings given may be to the events of the last times, in which apparently Jerusalem is to play so distinguished a part. From verse 28 the lesser subject begins to be swallowed up by the greater, and our Lord's second coming to be the predominant theme, with, however, certain hints thrown back, as it were, at the event which was immediately in question; till in the latter part of the chapter and the whole of the next, the second advent, and at last the final judgment ensuing on it, are the subjects." Com. Matt. 24: 3.

Of the correctness of this theory as a principle of sound exegesis, I shall say but little. It is entirely unsatisfactory to my mind, and has been strenuously controverted by some of our ablest commentators. My objections to it may be stated briefly. 1. There is no *proof* of such double sense in the Scriptures. They no where assert anything of the sort, and give no example of an inspired person resorting to such a

mode of interpretation. 2. There is no warrant for it in the ordinary *laws of language*, except when a writer is professedly employing parables, riddles, or allegories. 3. The secondary and so called higher sense is wholly *indeterminate*. No one can tell where it begins or ends, or how much is included in it. Observe in the very example proposed by the learned Dean, how exceedingly indefinite are the metes and bounds of the two senses; indeed, how the mind of the reader must flit back and forth from one to the other, making his imagination his only guide, and confessing as he does, "We cannot tell how applicable the warnings given may be" to the latter. 4. The principle is *unsafe*. Scripture thus interpreted becomes susceptible of any and every meaning which theory or fancy may invent. Witness the innumerable extravagances which have been put forth on this subject of the second advent, all based on the assumption that the Scripture language means something over and beyond what it seems to mean,—extravagances which have done so much to bring the whole subject of eschatology into contempt, and to dishonor the word of God. In the present case, it is enough to say that neither the Lord nor his apostles ever speak of but *one* Parousia, and never assign any other time for it, primary or secondary, than that existing generation. If there is to be another, to occur at some distant era still future, that fact must be gathered from some other source than their recorded words.

4. The *primitive Christians*, who had themselves

heard the preaching of Christ and his apostles, understood them as teaching its near approach. That such was the case with the church in Thessalonica is notorious. "As matter of fact," says Alford, "the apostles and ancient Christians did continue to expect the Lord's coming after that generation had passed away."—"This constant expectation of our Lord's coming, when he shall be revealed in his glory unto all, is one of the characteristic features of primitive Christianity." Kling, in Lange's Com. 1 Cor. 1: 7. Gibbon, whose testimony as historian on this point need not be questioned, says, "In the primitive church \* \* \* \* \* it was universally believed that the end of the world and the kingdom of heaven were at hand. The near approach of this wonderful event had been predicted by the apostles; the tradition of it had been preserved by their earliest disciples, and those who understood in their literal sense the discourses of Christ himself were obliged to expect the second and glorious coming of the Son of man in the clouds before that generation was totally extinguished which had beheld his humble condition upon earth, and which might still be witness of the calamities of the Jews under Vespasian or Hadrian." Dec. and Fall, ch. XV.

I ask, then, how could such an opinion have obtained such an acceptance if it had not in fact been taught by Christ and the apostles? Error might, indeed, spring up here and there in various ways, but whence this *universal* belief? It is often alleged that Paul wrote the second epistle to the Thessalonians to correct that opinion, and declare authoritatively that the Parousia

was not "at hand." If so, why had not the correction proved effective, both among the Thessalonians and elsewhere?—for, from the very earliest date, this epistle was received as of undoubted inspiration in all the churches. There is but one way of accounting for this indisputable fact. The whole Christian church could not have been brought to receive as one of its fundamental articles of faith a doctrine which had not come to them from the very fountain of all authority.

5. That the declarations of our Lord and the apostles, which I have cited, mean what they seem to mean as to the near approach of the Parousia is evident *from the connection in which they stand, and the purposes for which they were uttered.* That doctrine is rarely or never advanced in the way of a general didactic statement, but always as having an important bearing for encouragement, incitement, or warning, on some present exigency, in which the very stress of the passage lies in the fact that the Parousia was *near*. When Christ told his disciples that he would come in the glory of his Father to reward every man according to his works, and added, that some of them should not taste death till they had seen it,—what was it but to console them with the prospect of a *speedy* compensation for their sufferings? Take away this element of speediness, and the promise is robbed of its meaning. So with waiting and watching for his coming. I submit that it is impossible for any person to be in such an attitude of expectancy toward any event which is indefinitely distant. Let the reader try it for himself. Let him conceive of any great occurrence,



however full of weal or woe, that is to happen two thousand years hence, and see if he can, by any practice upon himself, come into such a state that he can truly say that he is waiting or looking for it, or expecting it. How could Paul be confident that He who had begun a good work in the Philippians would perform it for more than twenty centuries to come? What would be the force of such admonitions as, "Let your moderation be known to all men; the Lord will come two thousand years after you are all dead"? "Grudge not one against another lest ye be condemned; the Judge, some ages hence, *will* stand at the door"? "The end of all things is *far off*; be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer"?

I insist that it is this very element of *nearness* which imparts to this entire body of eschatological utterances their significance. They were not given to be dry didactics about the future, but solemn warnings or inspirations to courage, hope, and joy, for present use. To be such they must be drawn from events not very far remote. Such is the nature of man that he is and can be but feebly impressed by what is far distant in space or time. Olshausen clearly recognizes this fact in his remark already quoted: "Had the Redeemer intended to say that his coming was yet very far distant, such a statement would have entirely destroyed the ethical import of the prophecy, viz.: the incitement to watchfulness which it was designed to produce." Without it, "the whole doctrine would not have the slightest practical significance." This is certainly true, but we cannot



admit the monstrous inference he derives from it, that our Lord purposely used language calculated to mislead his disciples for the sake of that influence. Why did not the learned author see that the very alternative he states is a proof that the event was *not* far distant? I believe that it is just this, or at least it is one of the causes, which have made the “gospel of the kingdom” so ineffective in modern times, compared with what it was in the time of the apostles. Let the Parousia, as a *now existing fact*, be preached with as much earnestness as they preached it as an *anticipated* fact,—in other words, that Christ *has* come, that he *is now* upon the throne of his kingdom, ruling, judging, and rewarding men according to their works, with his mighty angels attending him to do his will, and by the new-creating energy of his providence and Spirit making “all things new,” and I believe that the event witnessed on the day of pentecost, and even greater, would speedily follow.

## SECTION V.

## OBJECTIONS.

There are objections to the foregoing view which it is my duty to consider.

1. The first is that so understood *the prediction was not fulfilled*; the Parousia did not take place in that generation. Says Alford: “All these præterist interpretations have against them one fatal objection,—that it is impossible to conceive of the destruction of Jerusalem as in any sense corresponding to the Parousia in St. Paul’s sense of the term.”——“The

destruction of Jerusalem is inadequate as an interpretation of the coming of the Lord here. He has not yet come in any sense adequate to such interpretation; therefore the prophecy has yet to be fulfilled." Proleg. 2 Tim. sects. 24, 28. In reply it may be remarked:—

First, that as a principle of interpretation this is *unsound and unsafe*. If the words of our Lord, according to the established and undoubted laws of language, do say, that the Parousia should be in that generation, then that was his assertion. If not fulfilled, it may discredit his truthfulness, but it does not disprove the fact that he said so. Failure to pay a note of hand when due, does not prove that payment at that time was not *promised*. The learned dean himself strenuously contends for this principle in other places. Often things are said in the New Testament, to be done "that it might be fulfilled" (ὅνα πληρωθῇ) which had been spoken by a prophet, when on comparing the event with the alleged prediction we find it impossible to see *how* one was the fulfillment of the other. Yet Dean Alford insists that we must so accept it, whatever the difficulty. He will not permit us to evade the force of the words by a hair's breadth. "Such a construction" he says, (that it might be fulfilled), "can have but one meaning. If such meaning involves us in difficulty regarding the prophecy itself, far better leave such difficulty in so doubtful a matter as the interpretation of prophecy unsolved, than create one in so simple a matter as the rendering of a phrase whose meaning no indifferent

person could doubt." Com. Matt. 1: 22. This is a weighty observation, and most worthy to be remembered. Had the author himself observed it, he would not have tried to get rid of the meaning of this prophecy of the Parousia, which is affirmed by a multitude of phrases no less simple, no less impossible to be doubted by any indifferent person, than the one to which he referred.

Second. It is not, I submit, competent for any uninspired man to say what is and what is not an "adequate" fulfillment of prophecy, against the pointed indications contained in its own language. There certainly *did* happen in that generation an event or cluster of events, which, considered in their own nature and in their relations to the history of mankind past and future, surpassed in importance every other that can be named, save only the death of Christ. That great spiritual and civil establishment, the Hebrew theocracy, which created at once a religion and a state, founded by the direct appointment of Jehovah amid the visible splendors of Sinai, and hallowed by a duration of sixteen hundred years,—an institution represented in Christ's time in the grandest city and most august temple in the world,—was suddenly, and with such horrors as never attended any like catastrophe, overthrown, and in place of it was set up another theocracy, a spiritual kingdom, which from that hour, like the stone cut out without hands, entered upon a career of development and conquest which shall one day fill the whole earth; whose capital shall be a "New Jerusalem" ten thousand times ex-

ceeding the old one in splendor and power, into which the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor; whose temple shall be the Presence of God and the Lamb, and where Jesus shall reign forever. Who shall say that such an event, or cluster of events, was "inadequate" to the most exalted conception of the language employed by our Saviour? We call it, indeed, for convenience sake, the "destruction of Jerusalem," from *one* of the incidents embraced in it, but it is a great mistake to suppose that that bare physical event,—which in itself may or may not have been more important than that of other cities before or after,—was *all* that we mean by it. And with all respect for this great commentator, I must beg leave to say that, precisely in the same way that he has done, might a rabbi of our Saviour's own day have disproved the fact of his first advent. Had not all the prophets declared that the Messiah should come as a mighty and triumphant king? And was the poor Galilean who stood bound before Pilate, forsaken by his nearest friends, and scornfully rejected by the very people whom he claimed as his subjects, *that* king? "It is impossible," Caiaphas might have said, "to conceive of this Jesus as in any sense corresponding to the prophetic descriptions of our Messiah.—He has not come in any sense adequate to those descriptions; therefore, this is not the Messiah, and the prophecies have yet to be fulfilled!"

2. Another objection of a similar character is, that the Parousia was to be accompanied by stupendous *physical phenomena*, which did not occur in that age.

The sun and moon should be darkened; the stars should fall from heaven; the Son of man should be seen coming in the clouds with power and great glory; he should be attended with his mighty angels, and with the great sound of a trumpet; the heavens should pass away with a great noise, the elements melt with fervent heat, the earth and the works that are therein should be burned up; and a new heaven and a new earth created. Because all this did not happen in that generation, therefore, it is alleged, the Parousia did not take place.

Now I freely concede that the prophecy was not fulfilled in the physical sense of these terms. I admit fully the incompatibility between it and any *such* fulfillment. What then is the inference? The same that every one makes, that the language on the one side or the other must be taken in some modified sense that will obviate this contradiction. Which shall it be? On the side of the prediction, the language, as we have seen, is simple, direct, plain; it is scarcely susceptible of a figurative meaning; it is repeated in a great many forms, more than fourscore times; and *we know what meaning it bore* in the minds of those who uttered and those who heard it. On the other side, we find the language poetic, symbolic, in itself absolutely incapable of being taken literally. The stars to fall from heaven,—the uncounted millions of mighty suns to leave their constellations and galaxies and take their flight to this little earth? Impossible! The moon to be turned into *blood*,—a vast globe of clotted gore? The sun turned into *darkness*? The elements,



—earth, air, fire, and water—to *melt*? The heavens,—the emptiness of infinite space showing to us only the reflected blue of the sunlight—to be *rolled together* as a scroll? Certainly not. In their very nature all these expressions are figurative. They must, because of their appropriate symbolism, or of ancient prophetic usage, be understood as referring to great moral changes on the earth, just such as we have described as connected with what is called concisely the “destruction of Jerusalem.” I shall endeavor to show, hereafter, that such *was* their well-known prophetic usage, as familiar to and as incapable of being misapprehended by the Jews of Christ’s time as their commonest dialect on religious topics, and in that sense they were all most signally fulfilled.

3. It is objected further, in the same line, that the Parousia of Christ was to be accompanied by the *resurrection of the dead, the day of judgment, the end of the world*, etc., and as these did not occur in that age, the Parousia itself could not have taken place. This is probably the most formidable objection that has been or can be urged against the views I have maintained. But the difficulty, to my view, lies in the restricted ideas which we have been so accustomed to give to the Parousia, limiting it without warrant to a brief time, as a single day, or a *point* in duration. The word itself, as I have already shown, conveys no such limited meaning; rather does it denote relations of permanence with men,—an abiding PRESENCE, which, beginning with the overthrow of the ancient dispensation, its sacred city and its temple, once the



dwelling place of Jehovah but now "left to them desolate," is to last as long as the Messiah reigns; long enough for the spiritual conquest of the world, for the resurrection and the judgment; long enough to find its most glorious realization in the New Jerusalem, which John himself represents to be "the tabernacle of God with men, in which he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall BE WITH THEM and be their God."

4. It is urged that the view I have presented is inconsistent with Acts 1: 11, which, it is said, teaches that Christ's second coming was to be *a visible and bodily one*, which certainly has not as yet taken place, and must therefore be still future. "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come *in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven." Adventists and Millenarians generally rely upon this passage in support of their views, with great confidence.

The meaning of this declaration depends on the phrase "in like manner,"—Greek, *hon tropon*. I cannot deny that many able commentators give it the signification above mentioned. Prof. Hackett says, "The expression is never employed to affirm merely the certainty of an event as compared with another. The assertion that the meaning is simply that, *as* Christ had departed *so also* would he return, is contradicted by every passage in which the phrase occurs." Alford: "To be taken in all cases literally, not as implying mere certainty." And Prof. Alexander: "The

Greek phrase, *hon tropon*, never indicates mere certainty or vague resemblance, but wherever it occurs in the New Testament denotes identity of mode or manner."

It may perhaps be deemed presumption for me to call in question the critical opinion of scholars like these, but as they themselves appeal to the other passages where the phrase occurs, we may venture to accept the appeal and judge for ourselves. The expression occurs elsewhere in the New Testament four times, viz. Matt. 23 : 37; Luke 13 : 34; Acts 7 : 28; 2 Tim. 3 : 8.

The first two instances may be regarded as identical. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,—how often would I have gathered thy children together even as—*hon tropon*—a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!" Now I submit to my readers whether our Saviour meant to say that he had longed to gather the wayward people of Jerusalem under his sheltering care, in an "identity of mode or manner" with that in which a hen broods over her chickens. Surely not. Undoubtedly more is meant than the simple certainty of the act; it implies equal tenderness and faithfulness, but it does not imply an exact resemblance in the *form* of it.

The next passage occurs in Stephen's rehearsal of the scene between Moses and the Egyptian in the desert. "Wilt thou kill me as—*hon tropon*—thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?" Here again I ask, was the mind of the inquirer fixed on the *mode* of the apprehended killing, or on its certainty as a fact? Was he solicitous to know whether it was to be done with staff or dagger,

and the body buried in the sand, or simply whether it was to be *done*, without reference to manner? The latter, most certainly. The force of the comparison rests in the anticipated repetition of the act, not its identity of form.

The remaining passage also relates to an incident in the life of Moses. "Now as—*hon tropon*—Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth." These are the traditional names of the magicians who imitated in the presence of Pharaoh the miracles wrought by God's servant. Ex. 7: 11, 22. But surely it will not be alleged that the false teachers whom the apostle condemns opposed the truth precisely in the same way that the magicians did, viz., by changing rods into serpents and the waters of the Nile into blood. The point of comparison in Paul's mind was in the *fact* of opposition, possibly with the further idea of malice and evil design, but it could not have meant to include the outward form or method of procedure.

Besides these instances in the New Testament, the same phrase is several times found in the Septuagint. Gen. 26: 29. "That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as—*hon tropon*—we have done unto thee nothing but good." Isa. 33: 4. "Your spoil shall be gathered like the gathering of the caterpillar, as—*hon tropon*—the running to and fro of locusts shall he run upon them." 2 Macc. 15: 39. "As—*hon tropon*—wine mingled with water is pleasant and delightful to the taste, even so speech finely framed delighteth the ears of them that read

the story.” In these again, as in the former instances, the point of the comparison is in the similarity of the results, and not in any identity of the outward act.

Instead, then, of this Greek phrase meaning what is alleged in every place where it occurs, we find in fact that it never means that; that such meaning, if put upon it, would be absurd and impossible. It must have been by inadvertence, without an actual examination of the point, that the eminent scholars named gave their opinion as they did. We take the liberty to offset them by the statement of another equally eminent, whose competence as a critic of the Greek none will question, the late Professor Crosby of Dartmouth College. “In reading this passage we are in danger of attaching more force to the expression in our version, ‘in like manner as,’ than the original words—*hon tropon*—require. These words *have no necessary reference to the particular manner in which a thing is done.*” Sec. Advent, p. 15.

It turns out then in this case, as in not a few others, that the materialistic aspect of this passage is due rather to its peculiar rendering in our English version, than to the exact meaning of the original. Had our translators been uniform in their renderings, giving the phrase here precisely as they did in every other instance in the New Testament, that aspect would not have appeared.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> This will be more apparent if the several passages be shown side by side. Two of them present the comparison in the natural order.

Luke 13: 34.

How often would I have gath-	as a hen doth gather her brood
ered thy children together	under her wings.

And does not the passage itself bear upon the face of it that it is not to be so interpreted? "He shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go." But he departed, as the narrative implies, under the same physical form that he had worn ever since his resurrection. He had been conversing with his disciples in his usual manner. There is not the slightest intimation that, so long as he remained visible, there was any other than his usual aspect. As he went up "a cloud received him," and that was all. But is *that* the way he is to come again?—*that* the fulfillment of the sublime language in which his return is elsewhere set forth, "in the glory of his Father," "with his mighty angels," the "flaming fire," "the voice of the archangel and the trump of God?" Insist upon it that exact "identity of form and manner" is meant, and you place this text in irreconcilable contradiction with every other which describes the ineffable majesty of his appearing.

4. But the objection most frequently and most confidently urged is derived from the language of the apostle in 2 Thess. 2: 1–12. We give the essential

Acts 7: 28.

Wilt thou kill me	as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday?
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The other two place the second part of the comparison first.

2 Tim. 3: 8.

Now as Jannes and Jambres	so do these also resist the
withstood Moses,	truth.

Acts 1: 11.

This same Jesus—as ye have	so shall he come.
seen him go into heaven,	

part of the passage in Alford's translation. "But we entreat you, brethren, in regard of the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him,—in order that ye should not be lightly shaken from your mind nor troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by epistle as from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is present. Let no man deceive you in any manner, for [that day shall not come] unless there have come the apostasy first, and there have been revealed the man of sin, the son of perdition," etc.

Such is the language which it is so often said, expressly contradicts the doctrine of the near approach of the Parousia. We ask the reader to note on the very face of it how far it is from justifying the statements which have been based upon it. "He warns them against the expectation of the speedy advent of Christ."<sup>a</sup> "We find that he sometimes refutes those who expected the Lord's return to be close at hand and gladly anticipated it."<sup>b</sup> "This interpretation (of the speedy advent of Christ upon earth a second time) was formally and strenuously corrected in 2 Thess. 2."<sup>c</sup>

What then *was* the error which these Thessalonians held? Our English version has it, "that the day of the Lord is *at hand*." The true reading, however is, *is come*. "Not only the nearness but the *actual presence* and commencement of the day," says Ellicott.

<sup>a</sup> Hodge Com. on 1 Cor. 15: 51.

<sup>b</sup> Bloomfield in loc.

<sup>c</sup> Stuart Com. on Rom. 13: 10.



“Is present,” says Auberlen.<sup>a</sup> He adds, “The apostle does not intend generally to put far away the expectation of the last day. We are merely not to let ourselves be surprised by the cry, ‘*Here it is now!*’” Alford says, “Is present, not is at hand. St. Paul could not have so written, nor could the Spirit have so spoken by him. The teaching of the apostle was, and of the Holy Spirit, in all ages, has been, that the day of the Lord is *at hand*. But these Thessalonians imagined it to be already come, and accordingly were deserting their pursuits in life, and falling into other irregularities, as if the day of grace were closed.”

The expectation of the *speedy* coming of the Lord, then, was not the error into which these Christians had fallen, nor which the apostle here corrected. On the contrary, in this very chapter he reiterates the command to “stand fast and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle,” i. e. to be in the attitude of “waiting for his Son from heaven,” which he had preached to them at first, and so forcibly enjoined upon them in his former letter.

But the “falling away” and the “man of sin” must precede the Parousia. How can that be made consistent with the theory of his speedy coming?

This epistle was written in the year A. D. 53. Jerusalem was destroyed in A. D. 70. Assuming this to have been synchronous with the Parousia, we have a period of *seventeen years* during which these events, on the theory I maintain, must have occurred. What was there in that period at all answering to the

<sup>a</sup> In Lange's Com.

description of those things contained in this chapter?

First the "falling away,"—Greek, *the apostasy*. In the original, the article prefixed shows it was some known and definite event, one that had been before spoken of, and which the Thessalonians would recognize, needing no other designation than "*the apostasy*." Now we find in Matt. 24: 10–12 that this was one of the very things which our Saviour expressly said should precede the destruction of Jerusalem. "Then shall many be offended," i. e. caused to stumble or apostatize, "and shall betray one another and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound the love of many shall wax cold." And that such a defection actually occurred among the infant churches during this very period is a matter of history. Tacitus, in describing the persecution under Nero, says, "Those who confessed they were Christians were first brought to trial, and after that a vast multitude of others in consequence of *their testimony*."<sup>a</sup> Frequent allusions are made in the later epistles, written from A. D. 55 to A. D. 65, to the dangers of such an apostasy. See especially the second epistle to Timothy, the epistle to the Hebrews, chaps. iii, vi, and xii, the second epistle of Peter, and the epistles of the Apocalypse to the seven churches of Asia. Who can doubt, then, that the apostle who had preached to the Thessalonians so fully the coming of Christ, as predicted in this dis-

<sup>a</sup> Primo correpti qui fatebantur, deinde indicio eorum multitudo ingens, Annal xv: 44.

course in Matthew, had told them of this great defection, of which he now reminds them again, as “the apostasy” which must precede that coming, an event whose occurrence in those very seventeen years is as clearly established in history as that of the wars and famines and earthquakes that were mentioned in the same connection.”<sup>a</sup>

Secondly the “Man of Sin,” called also in verse 8, “that Wicked,” (Gr. ὁ ἄνομος, the Lawless One). In attempting to show whom Paul meant by these appellations I would speak with becoming diffidence, where the ablest commentators of every age have been so much puzzled. Apart from that fact, however, I confess it does not seem to be such an unresolvable mystery. Three things I think ought to concur in the solution. 1. The man of sin must be a *person*.<sup>b</sup> It seems to me very unnatural to suppose that Paul meant to designate in such terms a mere abstract principle of evil, such as a heresy in doctrine, or a long succession of evil doers, like the popes. 2. He must be one in such position and holding such relations to the

<sup>a</sup> It is surprising what assertions the most eminent writers often make under the influence of a pre-accepted theory. Thus Olshausen, who denies the fulfillment of this prophecy before the destruction of Jerusalem, says, “The persecutions of that period were not so violent as to drive many away from the faith, and from the first glow of love.” (Com. on Matt. 24: 11-13). Yet among these persecutions was that of Nero, A. D. 64-68. If he deems this not a “violent” one, it would be interesting to learn his idea of violence.

<sup>b</sup> They—the early fathers—all regard the Adversary here described as an *individual person*, the incarnation and concentration of sin.” Alford. Proleg on 2 Thess., 53.

Thessalonians as to be an object of apprehension to them personally. What can be more improbable than that Paul, writing a brief letter to these friends of his on matters of the most practical character, should interpose among its affectionate counsels a formal prophecy of some disastrous event that should happen in distant ages and lands,—if the papacy, at least five hundred—if something even now future, two thousand years after their day, and with which they had no more to do practically than we have with what may happen in Ethiopia twenty centuries hence? 3. He must be, nevertheless, one whom for some reason it would be unsafe or improper to name more definitely,—who might be referred to only under these enigmatic terms, which, however, the Thessalonians would readily understand, on recalling what the apostle had said to them the year before when he was present with them.

Taking these, then, as our clew, we are conducted at once to the emperor NERO, as the monster in whom all the probabilities of the case meet. He was a person whose character and acts fully entitled him to be called the “Man of Sin,” and the “Lawless One.” His imperial dignity and resistless power over both Rome and the provinces made him one to be eminently feared throughout the empire; and being such he could not be spoken of in any but the most guarded terms on penalty of treason. And the sequel showed that there were good reasons why the Thessalonians should be admonished of the perils impending over them under his reign and over all the churches. Nero ascended

the throne the next year after this epistle was written, and ten years later broke forth in the most terrible persecution against the Christians recorded in history. Well might the prophetic pen of the apostle warn that beloved infant church of the dangers which lay just before them, and bid them strive by the cultivation of their own faith and steadfastness to prepare themselves for it, rather than run into extravagances of joy as if already entering on the experience of promises which could not be fulfilled for almost a score of years to come.<sup>a</sup>

Assuming this, then, to be the right solution of this much controverted passage, it ceases to be in the slightest degree opposed to the doctrine I have maintained of the early manifestation of the Parousia. I am confident that this interpretation cannot be refuted; I am sure that it is both natural and probable. The very coincidences in time, personal characteristics, acts, and effects are, to say the least, striking; not only not tending to disprove the speedy coming of the Lord, but falling in exactly with the scope of the predictions concerning it as first given by Christ himself, and afterward repeated by all the apostles.<sup>b</sup>

We regard, then, this part of the true doctrine of

<sup>a</sup> It was the common view of the Fathers that by saying "the mystery of lawlessness doth already work," Paul meant Nero. So say Victorinus, Hilary, Chrysostom, Jerome. Augustine and Theodoret also mention it.—A great many moderns have followed this view,—Lyranus, Erasmus, Gagney, Guiland, Cornelius a Lapide, etc. Dollinger, "First Age of the church" Vol 2. p. 61. Note.

<sup>b</sup> For a fuller exhibition of the view thus presented the reader is referred to the Appendix.



the Parousia as demonstrated. If the declarations of our Lord and of his apostles, repeated in numberless instances and in the greatest variety of forms, expressly and incidentally, positively and negatively, during the whole period from before the crucifixion to the very eve of the downfall of Jerusalem, always affirming the near approach of the Parousia, never in a single instance saying or implying that it was to be far distant, can establish any truth on immovable foundations, they have established this. Whatever else about the Parousia is unrevealed or obscure, it is not this particular of the *time*,—I mean of course within the specified limits of that “generation.” Not the fact of the Parousia itself is more clearly asserted than this concomitant of it. Not that fact is made more use of “for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,” than this element of its speediness. If any other things in or about the doctrine seem inconsistent with this they must be modified to harmonize with it, not it with them. If there be a foundation text in all the Bible where we can build the superstructure of doctrine securely, it is those words of the Lord:—

“VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, THIS GENERATION SHALL NOT PASS TILL ALL THESE THINGS BE FULFILLED. HEAVEN AND EARTH SHALL PASS AWAY, BUT MY WORDS SHALL NOT PASS AWAY.”



## CHAPTER IV.

### SCOPE OF THE PAROUSIA.

It has been already intimated that much of the difficulty of reaching any consistent view of the Parousia has arisen from the impression that it was to occupy only a brief space of time, rather than a long period. Perhaps our English version has strengthened if not created that impression, by uniformly translating the Greek preposition ἐν, in this connection, by *at*, a word that we apply rather to a *point* of time than a prolonged duration. To say that something shall occur *at* Christ's coming conveys a perceptibly different shade of meaning from saying it shall take place *in* or *during* his presence. Yet a mere glance at a Greek Concordance will show that the instances in which the word elsewhere means and is rendered *in* are at least ten times as numerous as where it means and is translated *at*. Why the translators always gave it this comparatively infrequent signification, in this connection, does not appear.

This protracted duration of the Parousia is a fact of so much importance, that it deserves particular consideration.

If we wished to measure the breadth of the ocean, we should carefully determine the exact positions of points known to lie upon its shores, or to be included

within its expanse. Having the longitude of New York and the longitude of Gibraltar, it is not difficult to compute from these with great accuracy the distance between them; in other words, the dimensions of the space intervening. So there are certain things which it is expressly declared shall take place in or during the Parousia (ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ) that, if we mistake not, will no less surely guide us to a correct idea of its duration.

1. The first, as all know, was the establishment of the new "kingdom of heaven." The old theocracy founded by Moses was to pass away, and be succeeded by a new one of a more comprehensive sway and a higher glory. "They shall see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." Matt. 16: 28. "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." Matt. 26: 64.

2. A second thing to occur in the Parousia was the destruction of Jerusalem. Matt. 24: 27, 34. Let it be observed that this prediction is not in that part of the chapter which many suppose refers to the day of judgment, but in that which is universally conceded to relate to the overthrow of the temple and city.

3. The destruction of the Man of Sin. "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his Parousia." 2 Thess. 2: 8. If the view I have presented of this personage be accepted,—the view which generally prevailed among the early Fathers, and is confirmed by some of the ablest historians of modern times,—we see a literal fulfillment of the promises in the events

of the same great catastrophe. In the midst of the siege of Jerusalem, and in the very flush of his power, Nero was suddenly hurled from the throne he disgraced, and died like a dog in one of the sewers of Rome. If we take the more common Protestant view of the Man of Sin as denoting the papacy, the argument becomes still stronger. Its overthrow certainly has not yet arrived, and we are already almost nineteen centuries distant from the generation in which the Parousia began.

4. In his epistles to the seven churches in Asia, which constitute the introduction to the Book of Revelation, John announces the repeated warnings of the Lord of his speedy "coming" to try and reward them according to their fidelity. The word *parousia* is not indeed used in this case, but it will scarcely be denied that the "coming" so often mentioned was identical with it. The familiar imagery used by Christ himself of that event, on the Mount of Olives, is employed. "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him." There can be no doubt, as it seems to me, that reference is made here to the persecutions then impending over the churches, "the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." In that great trial Christ declares that he will "come" to them with searching severity, to detect and punish the unfaithful, to strengthen and comfort his true children, and to reward those who were steadfast unto death with the crown and throne of victory

in heaven. The nature of the promise indicates the time of its fulfillment, viz., that persecuting era of Rome which began with Nero about A. D. 64, and ended with the accession of Constantine in A. D. 306.

5. In Christ's consolatory words to his disciples in view of his approaching departure, he spoke of certain "comings" which cannot be assigned to any particular date, but are to be repeated in the personal history of individuals in all ages. I do not mean to intimate that these are the same thing with the Parousia, in its general signification, but they do denote what shall occur under the Parousia, and are particular and special manifestations of it to individual believers. "If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will *come* unto him and make our abode with him." "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will *come again*<sup>a</sup> and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." When Christ enters into such relations to one that loves him, it is an apocalypse of himself to that soul as Lord and King, in power and glory. And when he comes to the bedside of him who has fought a good fight and kept the faith, and in his divine strength as the risen and reigning Lord, makes him a partaker of the victory he achieved for all his people, and bears him away to his throne and home in his Father's house, it is to make him a sharer in the glory of his Parousia. They are the fruits of that great and blessed Presence of the Lord which was to the apostles ever the source of so much hope and joy.

<sup>a</sup> Dean Alford says this refers to "the great *Revisitation* in all its blessed progress."

6. The Parousia in express terms was to embrace the resurrection of the dead. "Every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming"—(Gr. *in* or during his Parousia). 1 Cor. 15: 23. I need spend no time to establish this connection between the two, it being a truth universally recognized that one of the objects of Christ's coming in his Parousia was to be to raise the dead.

7. Finally, the Parousia, in like manner, was to embrace the general judgment. Matt. 25: 31-46. I think, indeed, that that sublime consummation, like the Parousia itself, has a wider scope than is implied in the usual materialistic conceptions of it. But this, at least, is certain that it is to embrace the whole family of mankind; that there never has been and never will be one to whom it is not appointed to "stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Here, then, is a predicted event which was to embrace within it, at least, the seven specific things mentioned. This, be it observed, is not a matter of inference, but of express divine assertion. Its two termini are the destruction of Jerusalem and the day of judgment. And the question now recurs, how can these two, with all that lies between, be included in one term, if you do not make that term one of vast breadth and comprehensiveness? Insist upon it that the Parousia means some *point* of time, some "day" or "hour," in the ordinary sense, and you create a difficulty

which I know not how to solve. Insist that it not only means such point of time, but that that "day" is still future, and you contradict the most express and oft repeated words of the Lord and of all his apostles.

Something, at least, *must* be done to harmonize these testimonies of the divine word. We cannot take up the overthrow of the temple, the founding of the new kingdom of the Messiah, the destruction of the Man of Sin, and the disciplinary "coming" of the Lord to the seven churches, and carry them forward into the future, as events which are still to take place. We cannot reach forward to the resurrection and the judgment and carry them back to the generation when Christ was on earth in the flesh. The grand programme of the world's history under the administration of our Lord, with its mighty procession of centuries and ages, refuses to be thus narrowed down to a single point. The powers of the mind revolt at such an attempt, under the pressure of any theory, to do violence to their intuitive convictions. You may resort to the hypothesis of types, making those primitive events the types of the greater ones in the future; you may invent the doctrine of a double sense, under which, when one thing is said another thing is meant; or you may devise some other solution, but you must do *something*. For myself I freely say, that, having reflected much upon all these ways, and having tried in vain to feel satisfied with any other, I can find none which seems so simple, so accordant with common sense, so perfectly able to meet all the conditions of



the problem, and to exalt and honor our Lord himself, as that which regards the Parousia as covering a vast period of duration, beginning with the generation when he was on earth, and lasting long enough to include all those great events which are to make up the history of time.

We find thus, independently of the meaning of the word and of the declared time of its occurrence, evidence in its predicted duration confirming the view I have advanced as to its nature. The Parousia is not something pertaining to a point, but to a vast space of time. It is not an event, but a dispensation. Like the ocean expanse, embosoming within it widely distant mountain ranges whose tops alone appear above the surface, its shores are the boundaries of time. It may be studded with myriads of particular events called comings,<sup>a</sup> like the isles of the sea, but they are all within the one common ocean. To say that because this or that great event has not yet happened—even to the resurrection and the judgment—the Parousia itself has not begun, is as if a voyager at Hawaii should say that, because he has not yet reached Hong Kong, he has not therefore yet embarked upon the Pacific.

<sup>a</sup>Says the learned Vitringa, “Venire dicitur Christus in nubi-  
bus cœli, quoties gloriam majestatemque suam in singulari-  
bus gratiæ, severitatis, et potentiæ suæ effectis demonstrat, et  
se ecclesiæ quasi præsentem exhibet.” (Christ is said to come  
in the clouds of heaven as often as he shows forth his glory and  
majesty in the particular operations of his grace, severity, and  
power, and exhibits himself to the church as if present).

## CHAPTER V.

### THE COSTUME OF THE PAROUSIA.

How, then, can the views now exhibited as to the nature, the time, and the duration of the Parousia, be made to harmonize with the representations of the Scriptures of the *manner* in which it should take place. It is declared that it should be attended with sublime physical phenomena; the darkening of the sun and moon, the fall of the stars, the burning of the world, the passing away of the heavens with a great noise, etc. Did all these things happen eighteen hundred years ago?

In order to answer this inquiry, it is necessary to consider what was the meaning of this language in the prophetic Scriptures, and in the usage of the Jews of Christ's day.

These representations are of two kinds, referring to two distinct things, identical indeed in time but wholly different in their nature; viz. *the establishment of the new kingdom of heaven, and the abolition of the old.*

#### SECTION I.

##### THE IMAGERY OF INAUGURATION.

Christ was to come for the purpose of establishing the new kingdom of heaven, and of being inaugurated as its King. How should this event be fittingly set forth to the apprehension of mankind?

The idea of divine manifestations to men had been familiar to the Jews from the earliest times. To Abraham and Lot, to Isaac and Jacob, God appeared, usually in a human form,—the “Angel-Jehovah”—speaking, eating, and in one case even wrestling, after the manner of men. To Moses in the desert he revealed himself in the burning bush. These, however, were, so to speak, private manifestations. Impressive as they were to the individuals that received them, they were confined to their personal experience, and could have had no wide effect upon the world at large. It was necessary, therefore, in order to establish his special government over a nation, and insure from them the reverence and obedience due to him as their King and Lord, that he should make a public, visible demonstration of his existence, and power, and majesty. That demonstration took place at Mt. Sinai.

Every circumstance that could add to its sublimity was gathered around the scene. The people, by a three months’ journey, were led apart from the rest of mankind into the highest, most secluded recesses of the mountains. There, in a broad ravine, shut in on all sides by lofty granite peaks gray with time and splintered and seamed by the storms of ages, they were commanded to prepare for a personal interview with their God. Three days are spent in sanctifying themselves for the great occasion. Around the base of the huge precipice which God was to make his throne, a line was drawn, beyond which none might pass on pain of instant death. It is for an inspired pen alone to describe what followed :—

“It came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.” Ex. 19: 16–20.

The narrative does not state by whom the trumpet was blown, but elsewhere we learn that Jehovah was attended by a countless retinue of angels. In Deut. 33: 2, it is said, “He came with ten thousands of his saints,” i. e., holy ones. “From his right hand went forth a fiery law for them.” The Septuagint has here, “At his right hand the angels with him.” In Ps. 68: 18 we read, “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels; the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place.” To the Galatians Paul says the law was “ordained by—i. e., through the medium of—angels,” (ch. 3: 19); and to the Hebrews that it was “spoken by angels.” Ch. 2: 2.

This scene was doubtless the most awe-inspiring that ever addressed itself to the eye of mortals. “So terrible was the sight,” said Paul, “that even Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake.” Heb. 12: 21. It invested the theocratic system then established with a

sanctity and authority transcending all human enactments. Often was it referred to by their teachers as bringing the nation under the most solemn obligations to obedience, and at the same time, as conferring on them the highest honor. "Ask now," said Moses, "of the days that are passed, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been heard like it. Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?—Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee, and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his voice out of the midst of the fire." Deut. 4: 33–36. The proto-martyr Stephen, in that recitation of the nation's history which so cut them to the heart and maddened them to murder, charged upon them that notwithstanding they had received the law "by the disposition of angels," God's ministers at Sinai, they had failed to keep it. And Josephus describes even the able but impious Herod, while engaged in a war with the Arabians who had murdered his ambassadors, as stimulating the ardor of his soldiers by reminding them that they had received their law through the ministry of angels, who might be regarded as God's ambassadors to mankind. Ant. 15: 5. 3.

Here, then, was the source of that peculiar imagery which ever after was wont to be used in describing the divine manifestations to man, and sometimes even of the ordinary operations of Providence. The Lord

comes in the clouds, amid lightnings and thunders ; angels in their shining ranks attend him ; the mountains shake at his presence ; and his awful voice is heard uttering law and judgment for the world. A remarkable example of this diction occurs in the eighteenth Psalm, the superscription of which informs us that it was a commemorative offering of praise for the Psalmist's deliverance "from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul." "He bowed the heavens and came down, and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub and did fly ; yea he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place ; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed,—hailstones and coals of fire. The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice,—hailstones and coals of fire." Of course, we are not to understand that all this actually occurred in a literal or material sense ; it is simply the portrayal of almighty power interposing for the deliverance of David. The real methods in which this was done are shown in the history, which makes no mention of any thing supernatural. It is, in a word, the language of *costume*, the full force of which consists in its conveying the idea of irresistible supreme power.

It is a curious fact, worthy of mention here, that this inauguration of Jehovah as the peculiar sovereign of the Hebrews has been made the pattern after which earthly kings have ordered the ceremonies of their own coronation. Arrayed in royal vestments, with a



brilliant retinue of grandees, and an imposing display of his troops, the new sovereign comes forth, with a herald blowing a trumpet before him, and the shouts of the multitudes crying, "God save the king." See the story of the accession of Solomon (1 Kings 1: 38, 39), and of Jehu, 2 Kings 9: 13. Even in modern times, the like ceremonial is observed at the coronation of British sovereigns,—the blowing of the trumpet by the Garter king-at-arms proclaiming the enthroning of the new monarch, and publishing his titles and dignities to the world.

It was in terms thus hallowed by association with the founding of their own divine monarchy, and familiarized to the Jews as the technical phraseology denoting the accession of kings to their thrones,—*the court language of inauguration*, so to speak—that Christ described his coming to men in his kingdom. The one event of their past history most memorable and sublime was the type of the one event of the future to which they were taught to look forward with the intensest interest. The Lord Jesus Christ, now exalted to his promised throne, should appear in the clouds of heaven with all the holy angels, resplendent in flaming fire like the lightnings of Sinai, with a shout, the voice of an archangel and the trump of God. And as the Hebrew nation had been gathered in solemn expectation around the mountain to receive their King, so before Christ should "be gathered all nations" (Matt. 25: 32), to receive law and judgment at his mouth. The grand type-scene which introduced the old dispensation lent its glories to grace the grander antitype that should introduce the new.

And not only thus was the inauguration of a King suggested, but that of One in all respects equal in power and glory to himself. It was claiming not only the throne, but all the attending insignia which had bowed the nation in awe and fear at the foot of Mt. Sinai. If the sublimest phenomena known to nature could indicate the rank of Him whose coronation they graced, the throne of Jesus should be no whit inferior to that of Jehovah. He who in his own person is the equal of the Father, should be also equal in power and glory, "that all men might honor the Son even as they honor the Father."

Was there then to be, in addition to this high symbolic signification, a fulfillment of this language in a literal sense? I think not.

For first, there is no evidence that, at this period, such was its recognized meaning. We have no reason to suppose that the four disciples who heard our Lord's words on Olivet so understood him. They were familiar with the fact that language like this was constantly used by their prophets as mere costume—the drapery under which divine manifestations were set forth. Compare Ex. 34: 5; 2 Sam. 22: 10-12; Ps. 50: 3; 97: 2-5; 104: 3; Isa. 19: 1; 64: 1, 2; Ezek. 1: 4; 10: 4; Dan. 7: 13. They knew that God's deliverance of David from his enemies was not attended by actual earthquakes, an awful form seated on a flying cherub, surrounded by dark clouds from which shot forth mingled hail and fire. They knew, in a word, that all this had come to be figurative language, used to exalt men's impressions of the divine majesty.

When applied by our Lord to his coming, its significance lay in the fact that he was to appear as their long expected Messiah, in a glory befitting his exalted character, and not less worthy of reverence than He whose throne had been established amid the sublimities of Sinai.

So with the apostle Paul. If he had understood that the day of the Lord was to be introduced by a *visible* appearance of Christ in the clouds, why did he not remind the Thessalonians, who thought the day had already come,<sup>a</sup> that such appearance had not taken place? Adventists who are now looking for it make the fact that no visible coming has yet occurred a proof, to them absolutely conclusive, that the Parousia is yet future. Why did not Paul reason in the same way when he wished to prove the same thing, unless because neither he nor those to whom he wrote had any expectation of the kind?

We are not to forget that the whole Mosaic economy was but a type and prophecy of the new kingdom of heaven, which was to be established by the Messiah.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> It is to be remembered that the phrase "is at hand," in 2 Thess. 2: 2, is in the original "has come." "These Thessalonians," says Alford, "imagined it to be already come."

<sup>b</sup> "It necessarily results from the nature of prophecy, that the kingdom of the Messiah should be represented by metaphors taken from the Mosaic dispensation, and that the facts as well as the persons of the former should receive the names of the latter, which were connected with them by an internal resemblance. This mode of representation is founded in the fact that the Mosaic economy was ordered with distinct reference to the Christian dispensation, and prefigures it." Hengstenberg's Christology. Vol. I, p. 231.

This is shown at great length in the epistle to the Hebrews. The tabernacle, its rites, its furniture, and its ministers, were all "figures for the time then present"; "shadows of good things to come." And throughout the whole, the method of teaching was from the literal to the figurative, from the material to the spiritual. The sacrificial lamb pointed to the Lamb of God that was to take away the sin of the world; the ministering priest to Him who offered himself once for all; circumcision to regeneration; the sprinkling of the victim's blood to sanctification by the Holy Ghost; the Sabbath to the "rest that remaineth;" the tabernacle to the perfected church in which God shall dwell forever. Never is the relation otherwise. The material type is never fulfilled in a material antitype; bloody rite has no bloody rite as its counterpart; no Christian altar answers to Hebrew altar, no earthly Jerusalem to the Jerusalem that then was, and was in bondage with her children. And so, by all the principles of analogy, as the ancient ritual dispensation was in all its parts symbolical of the new, which is spiritual, so its inauguration with material splendors ought to find its fulfillment in one that is spiritual. To look for one appealing to the senses is to reverse all the laws of progress and development in God's revelation to man.

But we have something on the point even more definite than this. Christ was once "demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdom of God should come." Luke 17: 20. He answered them, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," or as it is in the

margin, "with outward show."<sup>a</sup> "Neither shall they say 'Lo there!'—you are not to expect it in one locality or another<sup>b</sup>—for behold the kingdom of God is within<sup>c</sup> you." It is in the hearts of men that you are to look for its coming; it is a spiritual not sensuous kingdom, such as you anticipate. This clear and explicit language ought to dispel those gross and carnal views which look for an imposing temporal kingdom, established in some earthly locality, and inaugurated by grand sights and sounds, to make men stare, but to win no hearts with the majesty of enthroned truth and love.

## SECTION II.

## THE IMAGERY OF DESTRUCTION.

The coming of our Lord in his Parousia was not only to inaugurate the new dispensation—the kingdom of heaven—but to abolish the old. The old, indeed, had been intended as a preparation for the new, out of which the latter, in the fullness of time, was to unfold, as the perfect flower from the bud which had

<sup>a</sup> "So that its progress may be watched with the eyes." Robinson's *Lex. sub voce*. "None shall be able to point here or there for a proof of its coming." Alford. "What attracts observation." Bloomfield. "Every thing that excites observation." Olshausen.

<sup>b</sup> "The Saviour withdraws the kingdom of God wholly from the local and phenomenal world, and transfers it to the world of spirit." *Ib.*

<sup>c</sup> There is a difference of opinion among commentators whether the words *entos humon* mean *within* you or *among* you. The sense is substantially the same either way.



inclosed and protected it. But now, through the grossness of the nation's heart, it had become the chief hinderance to the new,—its stony prison instead of its fostering womb. Therefore it became necessary that the former should be utterly destroyed, which could be effected only by destroying the temple which had been its shrine, and the city and nation which clung to it with an idolatrous reverence. Hence a second class of imagery used in describing the event, derived from those natural phenomena, which, among unscientific people, have always inspired most awe and fear.

Foremost among these are eclipses of the sun and moon. To this day, millions of men go into agonies of terror when these happen. Showers of falling meteors, or as they are popularly called, shooting stars, are of the same class, and the recent discovery of the fact that these are periodical proves that they must have been of frequent occurrence before the Christian era. Earthquakes are the terror of every age. Fierce tempests have ever prevailed, especially in warm climates, in which, amid the incessant flashes of lightning and roar of thunder, it needs no stretch of imagination to believe that the heavens are passing away with a great noise and the elements melting with fervent heat, while the dense masses of whirling clouds seem to be the rolling together of the firmament like a scroll. And then the clearing up that follows!—the sun bursting forth in new splendor from the depths of the serene blue, and the freshness and fragrance and peace that breathe over the smiling landscape prompt the admiring exclamation, “Behold new heavens and a new earth!”



Now we can make no greater mistake than to interpret the imagery in the Bible derived from these sources after the methods of thought which prevail in our day.<sup>a</sup> Remember that the Jews were Orientals, born under the brilliant skies of the East, and living many centuries before the birth of what we call science. They looked upon and spoke of natural phenomena as they appeared to the senses. With them the blue concave of the sky was a solid crystalline sphere called the "firmament," the sun, moon, and stars were fixed in that firmament, like gems in their sockets, and revolved with it once a day. The earth was a vast plain built upon solid foundations, and surrounded upon its outer margin by the floods. The rains descended through windows in the firmament; earthquakes were the shaking of the pillars on which the earth rests; volcanoes were the flowing down of the mountains

<sup>a</sup> When all the books of the New Testament were written by Jews and among Jews and unto them, and when all the discourses made there were made, in like manner, by Jews and to Jews and among them, I was always fully persuaded, as a thing past all doubting, that that Testament could not but every where taste of and retain the Jews' style, idiom, and rule of speaking. And hence, in the second place, I concluded as assuredly that in the obscurer places of that Testament (which are very many) the best and most natural method of searching out the sense is to inquire how and in what sense those phrases and manners of speech were understood, according to the vulgar and common dialect and opinion of that nation, and how they took them by whom they were spoken and by whom they were heard. For it is no matter what we can beat out concerning those manners of speech on the anvil of our own conceit, but what they signified among them in their ordinary sense and speech." Lightfoot, *Hor. Heb.* vol. 11, pp. 3, 4.

under the wrath of God. The oriental mind, grasping these phenomena with a vivid imagination, wrought them into many forms of glowing imagery to denote whatever was grand or terrific. The Jews were not alone in this, but the same thing was true of all the Eastern nations, Greek, Egyptian, Persian, Indian,—of all indeed that have left us a literature.

But we, in these western lands and in modern times, have become as highly philosophical and practical. We have trained ourselves to look beyond appearances, and investigate ultimate principles and facts. We have learned astronomy and geology. We know that the sky is not solid; that the heavenly bodies are not luminous disks fastened to it; and that the earth is not a plain and has no foundations. To us nature and the universe are totally unlike what they were to the ancients. We neither conceive nor speak of them in the same way. Our words are scientific, literal; after the reality and not the appearance. For us then to interpret ancient language like our own is to plunge into endless incongruity and error. It would be like painting the ancients themselves in modern costume, and making them talk like Prof. Huxley.<sup>a</sup> It is to

<sup>a</sup> "The walls of the chapel [in the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence] were to be filled from top to bottom with compositions. They are representations of biblical events. That is to say, the names of the different pictures are so called, but in truth we are looking at groups of known and unknown Florentine beauties and celebrities, men, women, and children, placed together just as circumstances demanded, in the costume of the period, and in a manner as if that which the picture signified had occurred a few days before in the streets of Florence, or in one of the most well known houses.—Rembrandt

repeat the folly which condemned Galileo for heresy because he asserted that the earth moved, and has done so much to make scientific skeptics in our own day. It is only when we let the sacred writers speak in their own way, and understand their words as they and their contemporaries did, that we shall learn the truth, as the Holy Spirit designed to give it.

Such were the sources of the imagery which the Hebrew prophets had always been accustomed to employ in predicting the divine judgments upon cities and nations. Look at the thirteenth chapter of Isaiah, which is entitled "The burden of Babylon," and observe in what language the destruction of that city is described. "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.—I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.—Behold I will stir up the Medes against them," etc.

makes Mary sit in a stable representing a Dutch cow-house of his time, while Raphael gives her accommodations in old Roman walls, such as he daily passed by." Grimm's *Life of Michael Angelo*, vol. 1, p. 87.

Of the same school was the genius that painted Abraham's servants, in their pursuit of the robbers who had carried off Lot and his family, as *armed with muskets!* I have seen a picture representing Christ's resurrection, showing an old fashioned Yankee meeting-house with steeple and bell standing near by.

Take the twenty-fourth chapter, which is a prediction of the earlier capture of Jerusalem and the devastation of Palestine, by Sennacherib. "Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.—The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage, and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall and not rise again.—Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign on Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."

Still more striking is the announcement, in the thirty-fourth chapter, of the divine judgments upon the land of Idumea. "All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven; behold it shall come down upon Idumea," etc.—"For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch; it shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up forever."

Nor was language like this confined to one prophet; it was the common usage of all. See how Ezekiel—ch. 32—threatens Pharaoh, king of Egypt, with an

overthrow by Babylon. "And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon thy land, saith the Lord God."

The prophet Joel denounces a plague of locusts upon Palestine in the following terms, (ch. 2). "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand. —The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. And the Lord shall utter his voice before his army," etc. And the same prophet, speaking of the period immediately before the Parousia of Christ, employs similar language, which Peter on the day of pentecost quotes and expressly declares has reference to the events then transpiring. "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. It shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit, etc.—And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord come." Joel 2: 28–31.

With these words of the grand old prophets, then, ringing in our ears, let us go out with the disciples to Olivet and listen to the Master, a greater prophet than they, as he describes to us that Parousia which was to be initiated by the destruction of the beloved city



and temple and nation. From our infancy we have been taught these words of doom, and have heard them read in the synagogue service, with the record of their fulfillment, as the *prophetic vernacular* for the overthrow of wicked cities and nations. A half hour ago we heard him pronounce those awful words upon that guilty generation; and from the olive-clad slopes we look yonder upon that glittering pile of marble and gold of which he has said there shall not be one stone left upon another. And when, in answer to our astonished inquiry as to the time and the signs of the catastrophe, we hear him say, "The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken"—what is it but the familiar language of prophecy telling us that like as Babylon and Egypt and Idumea, so Jerusalem and the Hebrew nation shall be overthrown? Will any thought of sensible, material phenomena occur to us, any more than in connection with those ancient judgments on wicked nations,—especially when the same voice immediately adds: "Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled?"

So with the language of Paul, the disciple of Gamaliel and learned in all the Jewish law, when he assured the Thessalonians that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God." So with the kindred language of Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, writing to churches of converted Jews, that "the heavens shall pass away



with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up,"<sup>a</sup>—what was all this but the phraseology customarily applied to classes of events which had many times before happened, and which were then about to be repeated? And now looking back upon it after a lapse of more than eighteen hundred years, what difficulty have we in saying that it was all fulfilled in the overthrow of the sacred city and nation, and of that renowned system of institutions which for fifteen centuries had borne the impress of divine authority, any more than the similar denunciations against Egypt and Babylon and Idumea and other oppressors of God's people? We do not argue that because the sun, moon, and stars were not extinguished and the earth dashed out of her orbit, on that night when Belshazzar was slain, therefore Babylon was not then taken and its destruction is still to be looked for. Why should we reason thus in regard to that more stupendous judgment which came upon the city which had crucified the Lord and become the bloody persecutor of the saints?

I shall doubtless be told by those who have been

<sup>a</sup> He sets forth the destruction of that cursed nation and their city in those terms that Christ hath done (Matt. 24) and that the Scripture doth elsewhere (Deut. 32: 22-24; Jer. 4: 23,) namely as the destruction of the whole world, the heavens passing away, the elements melting, and the earth burned up. And accordingly, he speaks of a new heaven and a new earth, from Isa. 65: 17—a new state of the church under the gospel among the Gentiles when this old world of the Jews' state should be dissolved. Lightfoot on 2 Peter.

accustomed to more sensuous interpretations of the Scripture that I am detracting from the awful grandeur with which they invest the coming of the Lord. But it seems to me far otherwise. For is not the spiritual ever greater than the material? Did the angels who sang over the creation of the world deem the birth of one little babe in a herdsman's stall at Bethlehem an event of less magnitude, or less worthy to be celebrated with heaven's highest anthems?

“’Twas great to call a world from nought;  
’Twas greater to redeem.”

To blot out the sun and stars; to display a shining form amid the clouds; to shake the heavens with crashing thunderbolts; to let loose the imprisoned fires of the earth and melt it again to ancient chaos, is but to exercise a physical omnipotence, the lowest form of power, but to set up a kingdom of holiness in the hearts of a sinful race, a kingdom of ideas and principles regnant over the free wills of men, which in the face of every motive natural to the corrupt heart, or originating in an evil world, or urged by the prince of darkness, holds on its conquering way from age to age, subduing not only individual souls, but opinions, customs, laws, philosophies, and all the forces that move society and the world, is to exert a grander power, an omnipotence of a higher nature, and ampler resources, and a more god-like beneficence. It is only because we are so much creatures of sense, and have attained to so little spiritual discernment, that we are ever most impressed with outward glare and noise.

Let me refer to an event of our own day. A plain

man, in a quiet apartment, takes his pen and in a few simple words makes four millions of slaves free ! How does the whole world thrill with the sublimity of that act of justice ! Gather all the grand physical phenomena of these eighteen centuries,—all the eclipses and star-showers and volcanic eruptions and earthquakes and tempests, and how much less do they all together signify than this ! How much less thought of and talked about ; how much less have they affected the destinies of men and of nations ; how much smaller the space they will occupy on the page of human history ! No,—thoughts, principles, truths, are alone sublime. If we had a spiritual language which was the pure efflux and fitting expression of spiritual ideas, we should never have had to come down to matter and sense to find words to set forth the glory of Christ's Presence among men. Let us not, because we are thus compelled, insist that the material and sensuous is greater than the spiritual. No outward event of history was ever so sublime as the inauguration scene at Sinai. And yet says the apostle, "If the ministration of death written and engraven on stones was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away, how shall not the ministration of the Spirit—the introduction and carrying forward of the spiritual kingdom of Christ—be rather glorious ?"

## PART II.

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### CHRIST AS KING.

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Thus was Christ's Parousia to be commenced among men. He who first came in the flesh in a state of humiliation and suffering, to die a shameful death as a sacrifice for sin, was now to come a second time in glory and establish henceforth his abiding PRESENCE with his people. And the whole course of human affairs thereafter, both prophetic, as delineated in the Scriptures, and providential, as developed in the history of the church and the world, was what should occur under that Presence.

The outline of that history is, I conceive, comprehensively sketched in the closing part of our Lord's great discourse on the Mount of Olives. Having stated so fully the signs and the time of his coming he proceeds to describe the purpose of it, in other words *what shall be when he comes*.

I beg leave to protest here against the treatment to which this discourse is so generally subjected by severing the concluding portion, in Matt. 25: 31-46, from the rest, and interposing between the two an interval of time of unknown ages. The reason for

this, of course, is because it is assumed that the latter portion relates solely to the general judgment, at the end of the world. But no assumption, I submit, can warrant a procedure which is a violation of the very plainest principles of interpretation. The unity of every discourse ought to be presumed unless there are some clear proofs that the author intended otherwise. Nothing of the sort appears here. So entirely are all marks or indications wanting of a change from the subject with which our Lord began, that of the numerous commentators who insist that the change was made, almost no two agree as to the place of it.

Besides, the subject *in its very terms* continues the same, viz., the coming of the Lord in glory, nor is there the least intimation that it is not *that* coming the date of which should be in that existing generation. Nay, the concluding portion of the discourse is expressly linked to the former portion by the connective words “when” and “then,” which forbid the supposition that two eras are intended. “*When* the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, *then* shall he sit,” etc. Compare similar expressions elsewhere. “If I depart I will send the Comforter unto you; and *when* he is come, he will reprove the world of sin,” etc. Will not that be at the *time* of his coming? “I will come by you into Spain.” “And I am sure that *when* I come unto you I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.” Rom. 15: 28. Had the apostle different periods in his mind when he wrote this? Surely not. Without the supposed necessity,

derived from the language employed, of referring this part of it to the future, no one would have thought, on exegetical grounds, of thus treating a discourse which has throughout the most logical and closely compacted structure. I trust it will be shown that even such application of it does not render that treatment necessary.

Christ's Presence then in the world, beginning in that generation and set forth under imagery so imposing, was to be the presence of its KING. "Then shall he *sit upon the throne* of his glory." The phrase "to sit upon" is the appropriate one to denote accession to power, as when we familiarly say of a monarch, "He ascends the throne." It is not that he assumes that dignity to perform a single work only, viz., the judgment, but it is to begin a reign which it is elsewhere declared shall have no end. This is that "kingdom of heaven" which had been so long and so fondly anticipated; the one described by Daniel, whose sublime prophecy, we cannot doubt, was the prototype of the scene here depicted by Christ himself. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."



## CHAPTER I.

### CHRIST'S ACCESSION TO THE THRONE.

This is expressly affirmed to have taken place at his ascension. Mark 16: 19. "After the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and *sat on the right hand of God.*" It was the well-known expression employed in the second Psalm to signify the exaltation of the promised Messiah to his royal dignity as King in Zion. The same fact was affirmed by Peter on the day of pentecost (Acts 2: 33), and by Stephen as revealed to his direct vision immediately before his martyrdom. Acts 7: 55. In the epistles also it is repeatedly declared. Heb. 1: 3. "Who—when he had by himself purged our sins sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. 10: 12. "This man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." Heb. 8: 1. "We have such a high priest who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Heb. 12: 2. "And is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." 1 Pet. 3: 22. "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." Phil. 2: 9-11. "God hath highly exalted him, and given

a name which is above every name ; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Eph. 1 : 20-23. "He raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world but also in that which is to come ; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

These and many more passages of a similar character clearly establish the fact that Christ's actual assumption of his throne took place at the time indicated, viz., within that generation. In other words, his reign then *began*.

Hence it follows that we are not to look for another beginning of it in the future. Whatever enlargement there may be of it, whatever new accessions of power and glory, they will not be the introduction of a new kingdom, but epochs in one already established. There is but one kingdom of Christ ; that has begun, and is not to be begun again.

It follows further, that the *place* of his throne, the capital—so to speak—of his kingdom, is in *heaven*. The language I have cited, it seems to me, is entirely incompatible with the idea of a visible, temporal reign of Christ on earth. We do not indeed know where heaven is ; if locality is to be predicated of what is so

purely spiritual ; it may be near to or remote from the earth ; but so much at least is certain that it is in the invisible sphere. Heaven, the right hand of God, the majesty on high, the heavenly places, are not in this world of sense. It is in them that Christ is enthroned ; there he is set down forever. He will not change that throne for one in Jerusalem ; he will not *remove* from the invisible and celestial sphere to a visible and terrestrial one.

## CHAPTER II.

### CHRIST COMING IN HIS KINGDOM.

It has been shown in a previous chapter that the word coming can only be used of a divine being in the sense of *manifestation*. The accession of our Lord to his throne, at his ascension, was speedily followed by that wonderful event which first disclosed to men his kingly power, and initiated among them his visible kingdom.

“Next to the appearance of the Son of God on earth,” says Neander, “this was the greatest event, as the commencing point of the new divine life, proceeding from him to the human race, which has since spread and operated through successive ages, and will continue to operate until its final object is attained, and all mankind are transformed into the image of Christ.” P. & T., p. 18.

The day of Pentecost,—the day which commemorated the giving of the law at Sinai, and the institution of the first kingdom of heaven—had come. Jerusalem was full of people,—not its own citizens alone, but from all parts of Palestine and surrounding countries, who had come hither to attend the national festival. Suddenly a sound is heard, as of a mighty tempest, filling the city with alarm, and causing a vast concourse to run together. Lambent flames descend

and rest on the heads of the apostles, and with loud voices they speak in languages they had never learned. It was a stupendous phenomenon, and no wonder the thoughtful were amazed and were in doubt, saying one to another, "What meaneth this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, stands forth and explains the event. "The days are come," said he, "predicted by Joel; the Spirit of God is poured out; the wonders in heaven and signs on the earth appear, marking the close of the old age and the beginning of the new; Jesus, whom ye crucified, has ascended to his throne, and hath shed forth this which ye see and hear; that all the house of Israel may assuredly know that God hath made him both LORD and MESSIAH." How thrilling these words, addressed to that awe-stricken crowd! Three thousand were convinced, and accepted, on the spot, their manifested king.

A few days afterward, the lame man, lying at the Beautiful Gate, was healed; and the apostles being called to account for the fact again referred it to the power of the risen and glorified Jesus, and besought the people to repent, that the days of refreshing, of which this was but a twilight gleam, might fully come, and the Lord might return in his power to bless them and all nations. Being released from their confinement, they seek again the society of the believers, and together sing the second Psalm, the coronation anthem of the Messiah, who was thus manifesting himself in power as the Saviour and King of men.

But another and different exhibition of that power was needed amid these beginnings of the Messianic

days. We have seen that Christ was to reign in the two-fold capacity of king and judge; not merely to bestow blessings upon his friends, but to destroy and punish his enemies. Just then happened the sad episode of Ananias and Sapphira, by which was shown that the newly enthroned Lord whom they worshiped was arrayed in frowns for the false and disobedient, and that no scheme of sin could deceive his omniscience or presume on his indulgence.

Thus, then, it was that Christ began to *come* in his kingdom. A new power began to be felt among men, confounding the politicians and rulers of that day,—one which no decrees could arrest, no cunning plots could circumvent, no force could resist. That power made itself visible and tangible, not indeed to the outer senses of men, but to their spiritual apprehensions, producing effects which all the *éclat* of his bodily presence and of his innumerable miracles wrought in the flesh had failed to achieve. Still as yet no outward kingdom was set up. The converts did not leave the national synagogues or temple; they kept the feasts, observed the seventh-day Sabbath, circumcised their children, and were in all visible seeming Jews, still under the forms of the ancient *aion*, and still accustomed to expect and to speak of the *aion to come*. One more great event was requisite to complete the Lord's advent, to establish his Parousia, and give a visible inauguration of his kingdom.

And such event happened, just as he had said it would, in that generation. Jerusalem, the city of David, the capital of the Jewish state, with its sacred



temple, the shrine and sanctuary of the Jewish church, was laid low. A siege, the most bloody that the pen of history was ever called to describe, attended with horrors which no pen could adequately depict, yet in its minutest details singularly fulfilling a long line of ancient prophecies,—a siege in which, according to Josephus, a million and a quarter of people perished, ended forever the ancient dispensation, both as a civil and religious system. Then it was that the Christian church, emerging from the ashes of the old theocracy, and armed alike with miraculous power, and the faith and zeal of that martyr age, went forth on its appointed mission to subdue the world to her King. Then it was that the kingdom of God came with power, and Christ came in his kingdom. The world looked with dismay upon that tragedy, and though many were too blinded by ignorance and unbelief to discern its full import, yet *every eye did see it* (Rev. 1: 7); and since then, for eighteen hundred years, the gaze of the world has rested upon it, as the clear showing forth of the awful majesty of Christ, the rejected King of the Jews, yet none the less the Lord, the Judge, who thus came to men in the glory of his Father, and began among them that kingdom which is ultimately to subdue all other kingdoms and fill the earth with his glory.

In this view of the matter, there is no difficulty in the fact that the apostles and others who lived in the period between the day of Pentecost and the overthrow of Jerusalem spoke of the coming and kingdom as still future. It was so in its outward and

most imposing aspects ; but in its germ and principles it had already commenced. Both forms of speech, therefore, were not inappropriate. “ *This* is that spoken of by Joel,” said Peter, “ the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood,” yet twenty years later he could also say, “ Nevertheless we, according to his promise, *look for* new heavens and a new earth.” Though the new kingdom “ came” at the Pentecost, it was also still to “ come” at the grand catastrophe which abolished the old. This is precisely the same paradox that attends any statement of the relations of Judaism to Christianity. It will be admitted by all that the latter was to succeed and supercede the former. When, then, did the Jewish institutions cease? We answer when Jerusalem itself was destroyed. Till then, its sacrifices, its ritual, its festivals, its whole code, ceremonial and civil, were continued. When did Christianity begin? Forty years before, we also say, for then began its promulgation, its worship and its sacraments. In absolute doctrinal strictness, we might affirm that Judaism, as a divine institution, expired with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, in whom all the ancient types were fulfilled, and that Christianity began at precisely the same moment. But to outward view and to popular apprehension, the two for a time co-existed. The beginning of the new overlapped the close of the old ; devout men observed both alike, receiving both circumcision and baptism, celebrating the passover and the Eucharist, keeping the Sabbath and the Lord’s day, meeting in the synagogue service, yet not for-

saking the assembling of themselves together as believers in Jesus. Paul himself paid his Nazarite vow in the temple, and claimed to be a Pharisee; James addressed his epistle to the twelve tribes scattered abroad. By themselves and by the heathen around them, the Christians were generally regarded as Jews, until persecution compelled them to separate, and form distinct organizations of their own.<sup>a</sup> So then, the fact that it was customary for the apostles in that day to speak of the coming and kingdom of Christ as still future,<sup>b</sup> though very near, is no proof at all that in its higher significance it had not already taken place. It is only because the destruction of Jerusalem made that fact open and palpable to all the world that the grand epoch was popularly referred to that date.

It is proper to add also that in this sense of manifestation, the coming of Christ may be regarded as *progressive*. Every new disclosure of his kingly power among men is a new coming to them. It is in this sense that we are taught to pray daily, "Thy kingdom come," not implying that in reality it is not yet established, but asking that it may come more and more until its ultimate triumphs are secured in its universal supremacy over the earth.

<sup>a</sup> Neander's *Planting and Training of the Church*, p. 37. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, chapter xvi.

<sup>b</sup> Dr. Craven, in Lange's *Com. on Revelation*, pp. 93-100, makes this a principal argument in support of his theory, that the kingdom of Christ—the true Basileia—has not yet been established upon earth, but is still future.

## • CHAPTER III.

### THE KINGDOM LIKE A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED.

“It is,” said the Lord, “like a grain of mustard seed, which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.” “It is,” said he again, “like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened” (Matt. 13: 31-33). “It is,” once again, “as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear” (Mark 4: 26, 28). Similar in its import was Daniel’s prophetic description—“A stone cut out without hands, which became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

That the manifested kingdom of Christ at its beginning corresponded to these predictions is a historic fact. Six-score obscure persons,—men and women—meeting daily in a secluded upper room in Jerusalem, were all it could boast of on the morning of that memorable Pentecost.

For a long time also, though the number of the believers was much increased, yet the very fact just men-

tioned, that they did not formally separate themselves from the national worship, kept them in a good degree of obscurity. The acute though skeptical Gibbon dwells upon this as one reason why they so far escaped the malice of the pagans. "By the wise dispensation of Providence, a mysterious veil was cast over the infancy of the church which, till the faith of the Christians was matured and their numbers were multiplied, served to protect them, not only from the malice but even from the knowledge of the pagan world. The slow and gradual abolition of the Mosaic ceremonies afforded a safe and innocent disguise to the more early proselytes of the gospel. As they were, for the greater part, of the race of Abraham, they were distinguished by the peculiar mark of circumcision, offered up their devotions in the temple of Jerusalem till its final destruction, and received both the law and the prophets as the genuine inspirations of the Deity. The Gentile converts who, by a spiritual adoption, had been associated to the hope of Israel, were likewise confounded under the garb and appearance of Jews, and as the polytheists paid less regard to articles of faith than to the external worship, the new sect which carefully concealed or faintly announced its future greatness and ambition, was permitted to shelter itself under the general toleration which was granted to an ancient and celebrated people in the Roman empire."<sup>a</sup>

These facts strikingly illustrate the saying of our Lord that "the kingdom of God cometh not with ob-

<sup>a</sup> Decline and Fall, chap. xvi.

servation " (Luke 17: 20).<sup>a</sup> And they serve also to show the error of those who deny that the true kingdom of the Messiah was that which was begun at the Pentecost. That kingdom, they say, is still future; it is to commence after the conquest of the world to Christ has been completed, and to be a millennium of rest and peace. In this view of it there is to be no period of infancy and weakness; it is to be ushered upon the world at once in its noon-day splendor. But such is not the description which Christ himself gives of its earliest stage. Like all things having life it begins in the germ; it is developed by an inward law of its own, and attains its full strength and glory only in its maturity.

<sup>a</sup> Ante, p. 89, a.



## CHAPTER IV.

### PERSECUTION.

Scarcely had the new kingdom of heaven been planted before it was attacked by persecution. If its weakness shielded it for a time from foreign foes, it did not avert the malice of its enemies at home. As its corner stone was laid in the death of its Founder, so its superstructure was built up and cemented in the blood of his followers who laid down their lives for his sake.

This feature of the kingdom had been long predicted and was one of its distinguishing characteristics. "The kings of the earth," said David, "set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us" (Ps. 2: 2, 3). "They will deliver you up to the councils," said Christ, "and they will scourge you in their synagogues. And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matt. 10: 17). "We must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14: 22). "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"

2 Tim. 3: 11). Hence another proof that the institution set up at the day of Pentecost was the true "kingdom of heaven" that should be inaugurated at Christ's coming. If that kingdom is still future,—the kingdom of the so-called millennium—it can never be a persecuted one, for, by the supposition, the enemies of its king are then all destroyed.

The prophetic history of these persecutions is given us in the book of Revelation. We cannot pretend to fathom all the mysteries contained in that portion of the sacred volume, nor is this the place to enter into the many controverted questions which have been discussed respecting it. After many years study of it, I have come very decidedly to the conviction that the general view of its contents and of the mode of its interpretation presented us in the Commentary of Prof. Stuart, is, with some modifications, the true one. No other which I have seen seems so consonant with sound reason, and with the true principles which should guide in the exposition of prophecy. I believe it is growing in favor among the ablest scholars both in Europe and America.<sup>a</sup>

The leading design of the Revelation, according to this view is thus stated. "John wrote to console and admonish and encourage the churches, then bleeding at every pore under the glittering weapons of a blood-thirsty tyrant. And what does he do in order to ac-

<sup>a</sup> As one of the most recent instances of this fact, I may name the learned and eloquent Professor Edward Reuss of the Protestant Theological Seminary at Strasbourg, to whose able work on the "History of Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age," I have several times referred.

comply with his purpose? He assures the churches that this dreadful contest is not always to continue. Ere long victory will perch on the banners of the cross. The church will not become extinct by all which tyrants can do, but will rise from its ruinous state, will expand, will fill the world with its triumphs, and prostrate in the dust all who lift up a hand against it. To crown all, he looks with a prophetic eye through the vista of distant ages, and sees that the setting sun of the church militant, and the old age of the world in which it dwells will be glorious; and finally that the new Jerusalem will be her abode through ages that have no end. Short indeed, and mere outlines, are the descriptions of all that belongs to the *distant* future. But they serve to finish the picture which John had begun, and thus to complete the measure of consolation and encouragement which he designed to administer." Vol. 1, pp. 207, 208.

Before I attempt to illustrate this view of the Revelation in its application to the subject before us, let us glance for a moment at the records of actual history as to the persecutions which have in fact been waged against Christianity.

Those persecutions have sprung, for the most part, from three sources, Jewish, Pagan, and Mohammedan. I do not include the dissensions which have arisen within the Christian body, between different branches or sects, which, though resulting too often in bloodshed, cannot be designated as assaults upon Christianity itself. Nor would I be understood as comprehending every local or casual outbreak of hostility which has

been encountered by the gospel in its progress during these eighteen centuries. The classification is general, yet embracing within it all that has sufficient importance to be named in such a connection.

The first of these persecutions was waged by Judaism, the ancient and now apostate theocracy, which blinded by spiritual pride, and eagerly looking for a sensuous kingdom which should restore its former prestige, rejected and attempted to destroy the real kingdom which God had promised. I need not dwell upon its details; they are recorded in the New Testament, and are familiar to all readers. Beginning with the crucifixion of its own Messiah, this malignant persecutor pursued the infant church with relentless hostility for forty years, till its career was cut short by its own retributive destruction.

The second was inflicted by Paganism, then enthroned on the seven hills of imperial Rome. The ancient policy of the mistress of the world toward different religions had been one of toleration, and no sect was molested by law so long as it did not interfere with the public peace.<sup>a</sup> But this policy under the lawless cruelty of the emperor Nero was abandoned. Detected in his wanton crime of setting the city on fire, he meanly sought to avert odium from himself by charging the crime upon the Christians, and proceeded accordingly to let loose upon them the most fearful outrages. From that time till the abdication of Diocletian, A. D., 303, historians commonly reckon

<sup>a</sup> Mosheim, *Ecc. Hist.*, 1, 1, 8.

ten such persecutions,<sup>a</sup> in which both at Rome and in the provinces every effort possible was put forth to extirpate the new religion, but in vain. The heroic constancy of the sufferers proved the most effective preaching of its doctrines, and it soon passed into a proverb that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the church.

The third general assault upon Christianity was from Mohammedanism. The founder of this great religious power, indeed, both inculcated and practiced toleration. He recognized Christ as a true prophet, and the Scriptures as a revelation from God, and though his faith was propagated by the sword, yet its violence was turned against pagans and idolaters rather than against Jews or Christians.<sup>b</sup> Even the two great Saracen empires of the Caliphs in the East and the Moors in the West, though often at war with the Christian nations, had little ability to molest the church as a whole. So long as Rome, now professedly at least a Christian empire, maintained its power, Christianity was safe under its protection. It was not until the fourteenth century, upon the rise of the Ottoman Empire of the Turks, who captured Constantinople and overran the larger portions of Asia and Europe, that the Crescent acquired domination over the Cross. Thence-

<sup>a</sup>“The ancient history of the church does not support precisely this number, for if we reckon only the general or more severe persecutions they were fewer than ten; but if we include the provincial and more limited persecutions, the number will be much greater than ten.”—Mosheim Ecc. Hist., 1, 5, 4.

<sup>b</sup> See this subject fully treated in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*. Chapter II.

forward the scenes of the ancient persecutions were renewed; the most inhuman cruelties were practiced upon those who were denounced as infidels and dogs. They were robbed, were sold into slavery, and butchered without mercy, until the name of Turk became the synonym of all that was feared or abhorred throughout Christendom.

Taking then as our guide these known facts in the actual history of persecution, let us see what light they throw upon the interpretations of its prophetic history as given us in this book.

#### SECTION I.

##### JUDAISM.

The Jewish persecution is represented by our Lord in his discourse on Olivet as preceding the destruction of Jerusalem. We cannot doubt that the same prediction, in an expanded form, is set forth in the Apocalypse, chaps. vi.—xi. Nor is this conviction at all shaken by the objection that the book may have been written after that catastrophe. This is a question in regard to which there are and doubtless will continue to be different opinions. It is freely acknowledged that the weight of external testimony is in favor of the later date; while the internal evidence seems even more decisively to point to the earlier one, viz. A. D., 67, during the reign of the Emperor Nero. But even conceding the former opinion, I see nothing in it to forbid the reference of this portion of the book to the period of the Jewish persecutions. If the object of the writer was to console the churches then suffering



under the tyrannies of Domitian, he might well do so by first depicting the overthrow of their earlier enemy in Judea. In other words, the scope of a book in the main prophetic does not preclude occasional passages which are retrospective. In this way the course of God's dealings with the foes of his church may be exhibited as a whole, and the scenes of the future become doubly impressive in the light shed upon them from the past.

But for myself, I feel compelled to give a preponderating weight to the internal evidence of the date of this book,<sup>a</sup> which as already remarked, would fix it in the reign of Nero, and before the destruction of Jerusalem. In chapter vi., the red horse, symbolizing war, the black horse, famine, and the pale horse, pestilence, are the counterpart of the same woes described in Matt. 24: 6, 7. The souls of the martyrs disclosed under the fifth seal as lying at the foot of the altar are the victims of the cruelties enumerated in Matt. 24: 9-13. The opening of the sixth seal presents to us the same phenomena, the darkening of the sun and moon, the falling of the stars, etc., which are set forth in Matt. 24: 29, 30. The sealing of the hundred and forty-four thousand is the gathering of the elect in Matt. 24: 31. Chapters viii and ix are a vivid pictorial representation in detail of the "great tribulation" that should come upon Jerusalem and Judæa immediately preceding the overthrow of the city. We are not to look, of course, for minute correspondences

<sup>a</sup>See a well prepared summary of the argument by Dr. J. M. Macdonald in the *Bib. Sac.*, Vol. 26, pp. 457-486.

in single events. It is picture and symbol throughout, designed to teach us in general the fearful humiliation and destruction of the power which had persecuted the church and set itself in array against her King. The seventh trumpet in chapters 10:7—11:15, brings us to the consummation when the mystery of God should be finished, and the new kingdom of the Messiah, which is to be supreme over all the kingdoms of the earth is established, and which is to continue forever.

The striking correspondence between our Lord's discourse in Matthew and this portion of the Apocalypse will be most apparent by arraying the two side by side.

#### MATTHEW XXIV.

6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places.

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

#### REVELATION.

3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4 And there went out another horse *that was* red: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and *see* thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8 And I looked, and behold, a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with a sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and, then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other.

31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another,

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they *were*, should be fulfilled.

(The sounding of the seven trumpets, chapters viii and ix.)

12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood:

13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together: and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand* of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the *kingdoms* of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever.

as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from his goats:

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

etc., etc.

16 And the four and twenty elders which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God.

17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

18. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

Upon this subject the language of Dean Alford is very explicit, and all the more convincing from the fact that he holds to the later date of the composition of the Apocalypse.

“The close connection between our Lord’s prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives and the line of Apocalyptic prophecy cannot fail to have struck every student of Scripture. If it be suggested that such connection may be merely apparent, and we subject it to the test of more accurate examination, our first impression will, I think, become continually stronger that the two being revelations from the same Lord concerning things to come, and those things being, as it seems to me, bound by the four-fold ‘Come’ (ἐρχου) which introduces the seals to the same reference to Christ’s coming, must, corresponding as they do in order and significance, answer to one another in detail, and thus the discourse in Matt. 24 becomes, as Mr. Isaac Williams has truly named it, ‘the *anchor of apocalyptic interpretation*,’ and I may add the touchstone of apocalyptic systems.” Com. vol. iv., p. 249.

## SECTION II.

## PAGANISM.

The second great class of persecutions waged against the Kingdom of Christ was that of Paganism. The delineation of it is believed to have been made in Rev., chapters xii—xx.

The principal characters engaged in this tragedy are portrayed with wonderful power. First there appears a great bloody-hued, seven-headed Dragon, horned and crowned, whose sinuous tail sweeps over a third part of the heavens, dislodging the stars from their spheres. That there may be no doubt as to who is intended by it we are told that it represents "that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." He is the prime instigator of the persecution. Next there arises out of the sea a hideous Beast, of monstrous form, armed with whatever is terrible of horns and fangs and claws, to whom the Dragon, his patron, gives "power and a throne and great authority." He is the symbol of a king clothed with irresistible might, and yielding himself to be the agent and instrument of Satan in the bloody work he is about to initiate. An enigmatical designation, calculated to conceal its meaning from the enemies of the Christians, yet of easy solution by "him that hath understanding" of the cabbalistic use of the Hebrew numerals shows him to be the reigning emperor, NERO-CÆSAR.<sup>a</sup> A second monster, less formid-

<sup>a</sup> See an account of the *Gematria* or "Science of figures," as used by the Jewish Rabbis, in Geikie's *Life of Christ*, vol. 1,



able in aspect than the other, but endowed with infernal cunning and wonder-working skill, springs out of the earth and joins the Dragon and the Beast in their conspiracy against the saints of God. He is evidently the symbol of the Pagan religion, with its splendid array of priests and augurs and magical rites with which the established cultus of the empire holds captive the minds of men.

Well may we shudder at such a trio of foes arrayed against the church, and to read that "it was given unto him (the Beast) to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds and tongues and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain, from the foundation of the world."

That the Neronian persecution corresponded in atrocity to the fearful array here described needs no proof to any who understand the history of those times. Our present purpose does not require us to

pp. 256, 570. "In the Book of Revelation the name of the Beast is veiled from common eyes by the mystical number 666, but the reason for its being so becomes very apparent when we find that it is a cypher for the letters of the name of Nero." Thus

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \text{N} & \text{R} & \text{O} & \text{N} & \text{K} & \text{S} & \text{R} \\ 50 & + & 200 & + & 6 & + & 50 & + & 100 & + & 60 & + & 200 & = & 666. \end{array}$$

"Neron Kesar (Nero the Emperor), was apparently the name by which the Christians of Asia spoke of the monster. Thus the coins of Asia bore the legend, NERON KAISAR, the form of the mystic number. There are inscriptions at Palmyra in which Nero's name and dignity are written *exactly* as in the cypher in the Apocalypse.—De Vogue's *Syrie Centrale*, etc., 1868, pp. 17, 26."



dwell upon it at length. For a summary view the reader is referred to what we have said respecting the "Man of Sin," (ante, p. 69) and to the note upon that passage in the Appendix.

The next six chapters of the Apocalypse describe the defeat of these enemies, and the punishment of the persecutors. In chapter xvii is given a vision of Rome itself, under the figure of a scarlet-robed harlot riding upon a scarlet colored beast covered with blasphemous titles, and drunken with the blood of the martyred saints. A prophetic dirge laments her hastening downfall, while a rejoicing chorus in heaven exults over the retribution, and the approaching marriage of the Lamb. Then appears the conquering Messiah, the Word of God, followed by the armies of heaven, while the Beast and his allies prepare their final assault upon him. These are overcome and captured, the beasts are cast into hell, and all their hosts slain. Then the Dragon himself, the arch instigator of the whole, is seized and bound in the abyss, and a thousand years of rest for the church, and triumph of the martyrs ensue.

### SECTION III.

#### THE BINDING OF SATAN.

What, then, are we to understand by the binding of Satan for a thousand years?

It has been commonly assumed that it means that abolition of all moral evil and suffering, which, in the last age of the world, is to follow the final triumph of Christianity. As the introduction of sin and its woes

is ascribed to him as the original tempter, so, not unnaturally, his confinement in chains is taken to signify its extinction, and the restoration of paradise to the world. Hence the word *millennium*, derived from the thousand years here spoken of, has come to be synonymous with that blessed age, the era of universal holiness and happiness. But a more careful examination of the passage in its connection shows that this is an error.

1. In the first place, it is not Satan in his *general* character, so to speak, as the prince of all evil, that is the subject of the prophetic narrative; it is solely in his capacity as a persecutor. For this alone is he introduced upon the scene; it is to symbolize the qualities of a persecutor that the hideous characteristics of his person are portrayed, and it is this work which throughout the sketch he is represented as doing by means of his agents, the Beast and the False Prophet. Consistency, therefore, requires that the confinement he now suffers should be taken in the same special and restricted sense.<sup>a</sup>

2. There is nowhere the slightest intimation in the scriptures that the cessation of Pagan persecution was

<sup>a</sup> "Satan thus exerting himself by the power of the heathen Roman empire, is called the *great red dragon* in Scripture, having seven heads and ten horns, fighting against the woman clothed with the sun, as in the 12th of Revelation. And the terrible conflict there was between the church of Christ and the powers of the heathen empire before Constantine's time is there, in verse 7, represented by the war between Michael and his angels, and the Dragon and his angels."—Edwards' Hist. of Redemption, Period III, part 2.

to result in the immediate introduction of the latter-day glory. There is, or at least may be, a long period between the day when Christianity became too strong to be successfully assailed from without, and the day of its universal triumph,—a period, on the whole, of prosperity, of growth, of great activity in spreading the gospel among men, but not one at all answering to the idea of perfection and rest pertaining to her consummation in glory. That glory is described in chapters xxi and xxii—the New Jerusalem established upon the new earth, in which the Lord God and the Lamb are to reign forever.

3. The state of the world during the thousand years of the binding of Satan is not that predicated of her latter-day glory. Even at the close of that period there remain nations in the distant parts of the earth who have never been brought into subjection to Christ. Nor are these merely few and insignificant, as if not worthy to be taken into the account; they are a vast multitude, “whose number is as the sand of the sea.” But if any one thing is emphatic in the description of the latter-day glory, it is that of its absolute universality. “He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.” “All kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him” (Ps. 72: 8, 11). “From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering, for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts” (Mal. 1: 11). It is

absolutely certain that such a state of things as that cannot co-exist with the still unconverted and multitudinous nations that survive the period here designated.

4. The thousand years is a limited period; that of the latter-day glory is to be without end. Whether those thousand years are, as we believe, to be understood literally, or, putting a day for a year, as denoting three hundred and sixty thousand, or, more generally still, a long period simply, they are in either case inconsistent with the duration which is predicated of the final glory. The proofs of that perpetuity will be adduced hereafter. By no principle of interpretation can we make the two identical in their continuance.

I cannot accept then the common view that the millennium of the Apocalypse is the same thing as the ultimate day of glory and rest to the church. In endeavoring to show affirmatively what it does signify, let me advert once more to the marks of unity which connect this passage with what had gone before.

Let it be observed that all the personages mentioned here are the same that had figured in the preceding chapters. The leading character is still the great Dragon, the deceiver of the nations, who by his arts persuaded them to worship the Beast and to unite in warfare against the church. The martyrs again appear, who had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and who had not worshiped the Beast nor his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads.

On the other hand, while the topic and the persons re-

main the same, there is an incompleteness of thought in the antecedent narrative which needs supplementing here. The inspired seer had described the defeat and doom of the Beast and the False Prophet, with all their host. But what, the reader instinctively asks, is to become of him who instigated all that mischief, the greater sinner behind all whose mere tools they were? Is he to escape with impunity? It will be but slight consolation to the churches, then bleeding and crushed in his cruel toils, to know that Nero shall be overthrown, if their greater enemy be still at liberty to foment new persecutions and harass them not only without mercy but without end.

And this I take to be the significance of the representation which follows. It is the comforting voice of Him for whom they have suffered, responding to their cry and saying, "No, he shall not go free! Not only in the grand consummation is he to be utterly destroyed, but even now the end of his bloody career draweth nigh. He shall be arrested, shorn of his power, bound in chains, and shut up in the bottomless pit, the St. Helena of the universe, for one thousand years, while the martyred victims of his malice shall arise from their dishonor, and ascend to thrones of special dignity and glory, as favored participants in the triumph of their King."

The binding of Satan, then, I cannot doubt, denotes *the cessation of Pagan persecution* against the church. And if that view be correct, it is not difficult to assign an approximate date to which it is to be referred.

In the year A. D. 324, Constantine the Great, by

the defeat of Licinius, the emperor of the East, became sole monarch of the Roman Empire. He had many years before this embraced Christianity,—according to Eusebius, in consequence of the remarkable vision he had seen of the radiant cross in the sky accompanied by the legend, “By this conquer.” As early as A. D. 315, he had persuaded Licinius to join him in a general edict proclaiming toleration to Christianity, an edict, however, which was little regarded by the eastern king, who subsequently relapsed into heathenism and came into open conflict with Constantine,<sup>a</sup> in which he was defeated and soon after put to death. Constantine, now attaining the sole imperial dignity, issued a new proclamation reaffirming the edict of toleration, and exhorting all his subjects to “imitate without delay the example of their sovereign and to embrace the divine truth of Christianity.” From that time this edict was “*received as a general and fundamental law of the Roman world.*”<sup>b</sup>

This law granted a free and absolute power to all Christians and others to follow that religion which they preferred; enacted that the churches and lands which had been confiscated by Diocletian should be

<sup>a</sup> “The Christians formed the nucleus of Constantine’s party when the relation between him and Licinius became loose. Hence for this very reason, Licinius sought to obtain a more decided party by renewed attention to the religion of the pagans and by persecution of the Christians. Accordingly, the struggle that arose between Licinius and Constantine, A. D. 323 was at the same time a struggle between Christianity and heathenism. Licinius was defeated and Constantine openly professed the Christian faith, though he still put off baptism.” Guericke.

<sup>b</sup> Gibbon Decline and Fall, chap. XX.



“restored without dispute, without delay, and without expense;” and established numerous regulations to guard the tranquillity of his Christian subjects, and secure enlarged and equal rights of conscience to all. Such a law, enforced by the authority and example of an illustrious conquerer and sovereign, changed the religious aspect of the empire. Paganism, though not absolutely forbidden, fell into disfavor; its power to injure was wrested from it, its imposing worship faded; in many cases its temples were despoiled and its wealth bestowed upon the church; and to crown all, a new city was founded on the beautiful Bosphorus which thenceforth was the Christian capital of the empire and of the world.

This remarkable event was regarded by the Christians of that time, and by Constantine himself, as the fulfillment of the very prophecy before us. Accordingly not only was the well-known *labarum*, composed of the first two letters in the name of our Lord, placed upon the standards of the army, and impressed upon the imperial coins, but a public monument was set up, bearing a representation of the emperor, with the cross over his head, and under his feet Satan in the form of a serpent falling headlong into the abyss. “For,” says Eusebius, “the sacred oracles in the books of God’s prophets have described him as a dragon and a crooked serpent; and for this reason the emperor thus publicly displayed a painted resemblance (*cera igne resoluta*) of the dragon beneath his own and his children’s feet, stricken through with a dart and cast headlong into the depths

of the sea. In this manner he intended to represent that concealed adversary of the human race, and to indicate that he was consigned to the gulf of perdition by virtue of the trophy of salvation placed above his head.”<sup>a</sup>

Perhaps no event in the annals of history was ever more memorable than this. “This revolution,” says Pres. Edwards, the elder, “was the greatest revolution and change in the face of things that ever came to pass in the world since the flood. Satan, the prince of darkness, that king and god of the heathen world, was cast out. The roaring lion was conquered by the Lamb of God in the strongest dominion that ever he had, even the Roman Empire.”<sup>b</sup> “This rising significance of the cross,” says Schaff, “was a faithful symbol of the extraordinary change in the empire. The Græco-Roman heathenism surrendered after a three hundred years’ struggle to Christianity, and died of incurable consumption. The ruler of the civilized world laid his crown at the feet of the crucified Jesus of Nazareth. The successor of Nero, Domitian, and Diocletian, who had done their best to exterminate the pestilential sect, appeared a few years after the last and most bloody persecution, in the imperial purple at the council at Nice, as protector of this very sect, and took his golden throne at the nod of bishops, many of whom still bore the scars of persecution. The despised religion which for three centuries, like its Founder in the days of his humiliation, had not where

<sup>a</sup>De Vita Const. Lib. 1, cap. 40.

<sup>b</sup>Work of Redemption. Period III, part 2.

to lay his head, was raised to sovereign authority in the state ; entered into the prerogatives of the pagan priesthood ; grew rich and powerful ; built countless churches and altars out of the stones of idol temples to the honor of Christ and his martyrs ; employed the wisdom of Greece and Rome to vindicate the foolishness of the cross ; exerted a molding influence upon civil legislation ; ruled the life of the people, and began to control the general course of civilization.”<sup>a</sup>

Such seems to have been the event disclosed to the apostle in Patmos under the symbol of the binding of Satan. It was the one single promise, little estimated by us who live in these late days of prosperous ease, but which to the martyrs and confessors, companions of John in “tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,” was pregnant with most joy-

<sup>a</sup>Bib. Sac. vol. XX. p. 788.

“It is not necessary to do more than enumerate the acts of Constantine’s ecclesiastical legislation in order to see the vastness of the revolution of which he was the leader. In the year after his conversion was issued the edict of toleration. Then followed in rapid succession, the decree for the observance of Sunday in the towns of the Empire, the use of prayers for the army, the abolition of the punishment of crucifixion, the encouragement of the emancipation of slaves, the discouragement of infanticide, the prohibition of licentious and cruel rites, the prohibition of gladiatorial games. Every one of these steps was a gain to the Roman empire and to mankind, such as not even the Antonines had ventured to attempt, and of those benefits none has been altogether lost. Undoubtedly, if Constantine is to be judged by the place which he occupies amongst the benefactors of mankind, he would rank not amongst the secondary characters of history, but amongst the very first.” Stanley’s *Eastern Church*, p. 293.

ful import, that pagan persecution should soon be ended. The bloody dragon who was preying upon them should be cast down from his throne. The very cross itself, the detested symbol of his enmity, should become the trophy of victory over him. It may be objected that this comes far short of our ideas as to what this long looked for thousand years was to be. True, pagan persecution ceased, and yet the centuries which followed were anything but an era of prosperity to the church. Ignorance, superstition, and barbarism settled like a pall upon the nations, marking these as the Dark Ages of the world. The papacy usurped secular power, and took up in its turn the bloody weapons of persecution which had fallen from heathen hands. The Bible became a sealed book even within the church, and true religion fled for safety to mountain fastnesses and inaccessible valleys. Was *this*, I shall be asked, with contemptuous surprise, the *millennium*? And my answer must still be in the affirmative,<sup>a</sup> reiterating my former remark that the

<sup>a</sup> See Bush on the Millennium, in which nearly the same view is advocated that have here presented.

“We are disposed to think that the period in question is not meant to be literally and chronologically one thousand years. The number is put indefinitely; it points to a time when Christianity had triumphed over paganism. Heathenism had been destroyed in the Roman empire. This leads to the ancient view, viz. : that the period is past, not future. It will be observed that the Beast and the False Prophet are both destroyed. Chapter xx. Now the Beast cannot mean the papacy, as has been often assumed. It refers to the heathen power which was opposed to Christ and his religion. Hence the millennium began after the abolition of paganism in the Roman empire.” Davidson, *Introd.* Vol. 3, p. 630.

surprise expressed proceeds from a wholly wrong assumption of the nature of the period in question, confounding it with that era of universal rest and glory which is to follow sooner or later after the *last* great persecution, when not only shall Satan be bound in chains, but when he, and death, and Hades, with all enemies of the now triumphant kingdom of Christ, shall be cast into the lake of fire.

What then was to be that last persecution?

#### SECTION IV.

#### GOG AND MAGOG.

The thousand years have expired, and Satan is loose again. In the distant regions of the earth,—the land of Gog and Magog,—are mighty nations, with a population innumerable “as the sand of the sea.” These he stirs up against the saints. They leave their barbarous homes, invade the Christian territory, surround its capital and the beloved city, Jerusalem,—but are destroyed by the lightnings of heaven. What is this but a graphic description of the rise, the conquests, and the ultimate overthrow of the OTTOMAN EMPIRE, the great monarchy in which Mohammedanism, the rival religion to Christianity, enthroned itself and undertook the conquest of the world?

Magog was the second son of Japheth (Gen. 10 : 2), and the name seems to have been borne also by the people descended from him. He and his brothers are generally regarded as having settled in the northern regions of Asia beyond the Euxine and Caspian seas, and become the progenitors of the various tribes



bearing the general designation of Scythians. "Jewish tradition, as preserved by Josephus and Jerome, extended the name (Magog) to all the nomad tribes beyond the Caucasus and the Palus Mæotis, and from the Caspian sea to India, thus including the Tartar and Mongolian tribes, as well as those more properly belonging to the Scythians."<sup>a</sup> In the prophecies of Ezekiel are recorded a series of denunciations against this people in which GOG appears as their prince or ruler, and MAGOG as the designation of their country. Ezek. 38 : 30.

This vast region, the inexhaustible hive of the northern barbarians who from time immemorial had been the terror of the civilized world, was the original source of the TURKS, who began to figure in history in the sixth century. As early as A. D. 545, a Turkish invasion overspread the continent from the Euxine sea to China, but their power lasted only about two centuries. From time to time they appeared again amid the commotions of the East, and in 1206 they composed a part of the empire of the Great Mogul, Zingis Khan, who reduced to his sway nearly all Asia and a large portion of Europe. In the year A. D. 1299 Athman or OTHMAN, one of their chieftains, invaded and plundered the Christian province of Nicomeda, in Asia Minor, and twenty-seven years later obtained possession of its capital, the beautiful city of Prusa, now Broosa. The lives and property of the Christians were ransomed on the payment of thirty thousand crowns in gold, and the city converted into a Moham-

<sup>a</sup> W. L. Alexander, in Kitto Bib. Cyc.



medan capital. "From the conquest of Prusa," says Gibbon, "*we may date the true era of the Ottoman Empire.*"<sup>a</sup> This was in the year 1326, one thousand and two years from the promulgation of the imperial edict of Constantine.

It is difficult at this day for any who are not thoroughly familiar with the history of the East to understand what the Ottoman Empire was in its relations to Christianity. Turkey is now, emphatically, "the sick man," holding his very throne by the sufferance of Christian nations. But three centuries ago it was something very different from this. The following description taken from the learned history of Richard Knolles, published in 1603, at the time when that empire was in the hight of its prosperity, will show how it was regarded at that time.

"There stept vp among the Turkes in Bithynia one Osman or OTHOMAN, of the Ozugian tribe or familie, a man of great spirit and valor, who by little and little growing vp amongst the rest of his countrymen and other the effeminate Christians on that side of Asia, at last, like another Romulus, tooke vpon him the name of a Sultan or King, and is right worthily accounted the first founder of the mightie empire of the Turkes, which, continued by many descents directly in the line of himself even vnto Achmet who now reigneth, is from a small beginning become the greatest terrour of the worlde, and holding in subjection many greate and mightie kingdoms in Asia, Europe, and Africke, is grown to that height of pride as that it

<sup>a</sup> Decline and Fall, chap. lxiv.

threatneth destruction vnto the rest of the kingdoms of the earth, laboring with nothing more than the weight of itselfe. In the greatnesse whereof is swallowed vp both the name and empire of the Sarasins, the glorious empire of the Greeks, the renowned kingdoms of Macedonia, Peloponessus, Epirus, Bulgaria, Servia, Bosnia, Armenia, Cyprus, Syria, Egypt, Judea, Tunes, Algeirs, Media, Mesopotamia, with a great part of Hungarie, as also of the Persian Kingdom, and all those churches and places so much spoken of in holy Scripture (the Romans onely excepted), and in brief, so much of Christendom as farre exceedeth that which is thereof at this day left. So that at this present, if you consider the beginning, progress, and perpetual felicitie of this the Othoman Empire, there is in this world nothing more admirable or strange ; if the greatnesse and lustre thereof, nothing more magnificent or glorious ; if the power and strength thereof, nothing more dreadful and dangerous ; which, wondering at nothing but the beauty of itself, and drunk with the pleasant wine of perpetual felicitie, holdeth all the rest of the world in scorne, thundering out nothing but still bloud and warre, with a full perswasion in time to rule over all, prefining vnto itself no other limits than the vttermost bounds of the earth, from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same.”<sup>a</sup>

The same writer, at the close of his history of Othman, speaks of him as the founder of the empire thus :

“Of a poore lordship he left a great kingdom, hav-

<sup>a</sup>Generall Historie of the Turks, *Preface*.

ing subdved a great part of the lesser Asia, and is worthily accounted the first founder of the Turks' great kingdom and empire. Of him the Turkish kings and emperors ever since have been called the *Othman* kings and emperours, as lineally of him descended, and the Turks themselves *Osmanidae*, as the people or subjects of Othman or Osman, for so he is of the Turks commonly called."<sup>a</sup>

That the Turkish empire has ever been hostile to Christianity is one of the most familiar facts of history. In 1460, under Mahomet II, Constantinople was captured with terrible slaughter, its people murdered or sold into captivity, its churches burned or converted into mosks, and the city of the first Christian emperor made the capital of Islam. In 1517 the Holy Land was overrun, and Jerusalem itself, "the beloved city," taken. For more than three centuries it has maintained its sway over the lands where the Saviour and his apostles taught and died, and has exercised a pitiless despotism over all their followers. The market places of her cities have been public marts, where Christians of both sexes and of all ages have been sold into perpetual slavery. Confiscation, oppressive taxation, and open robbery, have despoiled them of their goods, and the murder of an unbelieving dog has been esteemed as a service to Allah and his Prophet. It is only within the present generation, under the growing influence of the western kingdoms, that its hostility has at all abated, and a toleration

<sup>a</sup> Id. p. 177.

of the Christian faith has been reluctantly conceded. And now as we write, it is professedly as an oppressor and persecutor of Christians that it has apparently been brought to the last extremity by Russia. There are undoubtedly elements of worldly ambition lying underneath the contest, but even this ambition points in the same direction, to recover from the grasp of the invader that city which was founded by the first Christian emperor, and for more than a thousand years was the capital, or one of the capitals, of the Christian world.<sup>a</sup>

Upon the destruction of this third great persecuting power, it is predicted that "the devil that deceived" these nations shall be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, where the Beast and the False Prophet are"—his former allies in enmity to Christ,—“and shall be tormented day and night forever.” That is, bearing

<sup>a</sup> I take the liberty of saying here, that I advance the foregoing theory as to the power intended under the mystic names of Gog and Magog, with very great diffidence, rather because I can not find any considerable weight of authority for it among the commentators than because of any lack of self-evidencing indicia in the theory itself. The name "Magog," so certainly belonging to the region whence the Ottoman Turks originated; the time of their introduction upon the scene, almost an exact 1000 years from Constantine's edict suppressing Roman persecution; their vast numbers; the nature of their conquests, viz. the "breadth of the land," i. e. the Christian territory; "the camp of the saints," i. e. the fortified Christian capitol; and "the beloved city," Jerusalem—all these constitute a series of circumstantial coincidences with the known facts too remarkable to be accidental. What other theory can be named embodying so many, and those not fanciful or conjectural, but in strict accordance with the plain testimony of history?

in mind still the part that he has been acting hitherto, persecution by hostile nations against Christianity shall forever cease. That we are drawing near to that period seems very probable. The persecuting empire of Mohammed is already in its dotage, and any serious attempts to renew its ancient assaults on Christianity would infallibly lead to its prompt extinction as by "a fire from God out of heaven." The Christian nations have become the mightiest in the world. No anti-christian power, Pagan, Buddhistic, or Mohammedan could withstand their united forces for a day. On the other hand Christianity has become itself the aggressor, and with weapons not carnal, the Bible and the appliances of Christian civilization, is going forth on its career of conquest which, according to all present appearances, must in a few centuries, not to say a few years, embrace the whole family of man.

## SECTION V.

## THE RESURRECTION OF THE MARTYRS.

During the thousand years of the binding of Satan, there should take place what is described by the Seer as follows :

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.



But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection : on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with him a thousand years."

The first statement in this passage is of the most general character. It is as if the apostle had at first but a glimpse of a scene which he did not understand. He saw thrones, persons sitting upon them, and judicial or royal (for ruling and judging are synonymous) dignity given to them. Then, as if a clearer view was afforded him, or an explanation added, he expands that outline statement into the fuller one succeeding. This being the case, we may understand the connective "and" in the sense of "even"—"to wit." The same well known usage of the Greek conjunction appears again near the close of the verse.

The persons here referred to are the *martyrs* of the preceding period of persecution, viz., those who had been "beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God." The remaining language probably includes also the others who had been equally faithful in refusing obedience to the Beast at the peril of their lives, though they were not actually put to death. These—the martyrs and confessors—and no others are the subject of the passage. The assumption which is often made that all the pious dead are included, is entirely without warrant from the passage itself, and tends to involve the whole in inextricable confusion.

These "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand



years." Various opinions have been advanced as to the nature of this resurrection. 1. Some understand it literally of the resurrection of the body; the martyrs, as the reward of their constancy, being raised to glory a thousand years before the general resurrection. Millenarians generally add to this the idea that this first resurrection extends to all the righteous dead, and that the place of their reigning is to be here on earth. But I see no ground for either of these beliefs, either in the language before us or in the eschatological teachings of the Scriptures in general. 2. Whitby and other post millenarians regard this not as a resurrection of the *persons* of the martyrs, but of their *principles* and spirit. "It may," says Archbishop Whately, "signify not the literal raising of dead men, but the raising up of an increased Christian zeal and holiness: the revival in the Christian church, or in some considerable portion of it, of the *spirit* and *energy* of the noble martyrs of old (even as John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elias); so that Christian principles shall be displayed in action throughout the world in an infinitely greater degree than ever before."<sup>a</sup> This theory seems to me more inadmissible than the former. The bare reading of the passage suggests its inadequacy, and almost compels the inference that it was resorted to, not because it was the natural and obvious import of the text, but because it was the most plausible way out of the difficulties caused by the many erroneous assumptions made as to the general scope and design of the book. Most undeniably, the reward vouchsafed

<sup>a</sup> Essays on the Future State.

to those martyrs and confessors was something personal to them, which made them "blessed and holy" in an eminent degree.

That reward lies upon the face of the passage, and so plainly that I marvel it could ever be mistaken. *Judicial dignity was given to them; they reigned with Christ.*

They *lived*, that is, they *reigned*. We take the two words here as synonymous, the *and* being the kai epexegetical or explanatory, so well-known to commentators.<sup>a</sup> It is a use of the word often occurring in the Scriptures. Robinson instances Matt. 21: 5—"an ass, *that is*, a colt." 1 Cor. 15: 24; James 1: 27; 3: 9, "God, *that is*, the Father." Matt. 13: 41. "Things that offend, *that is*, them which do iniquity." Rom. 1: 5. "Grace, *that is*, the apostleship," etc.

The word *live* often has the signification to be blessed, i. e. to live emphatically, to have life in an intensified degree. Rom. 10: 5; Gal. 3: 12. "He that doeth these things shall *live* in them." 1 Thess. 3: 8. "Now we *live* if ye stand fast." Luke 10: 28. "This do, and thou shalt *live*." Heb. 12: 9. "Shall we not be in subjection to the Father of spirits and *live*?" The idea, then is, that these faithful witnesses for Christ, whom their enemies supposed they had utterly destroyed, still *lived*, i. e. they were exalted to a high state of felicity. Then, as if to be more explicit, it is added, "They reigned with Christ." In other words, their living consisted in the honor of par-

<sup>a</sup> Winer's N. T. Grammar, p. 458.

ticipating in the administration of the kingdom with Christ the king.

This is something more than "entering the kingdom," "seeing the kingdom," "inheriting the kingdom," etc., which is promised to all believers. Every loyal subject of a monarch may share in the happiness flowing from his reign, its peace, prosperity, security, and glory. But not all are elevated to princely rank in it, and made participants in the government itself. This special honor is reserved in Christ's kingdom for the martyrs and confessors who had been faithful unto death. In our loose way of quoting the Scriptures, we have become habituated to cite these extraordinary promises as if pertaining to all Christ's people. We doubt, however, if an instance can be found in which this dignity of kingship in heaven is not predicated solely of those who, like their Master, reach it by the way of suffering and death for his sake. "*Inter feras, per crucem, ad coronam.*"

This peculiar reward of the martyrs is often mentioned elsewhere. When the two sons of Zebedee petitioned for princely thrones on either hand of Christ in his kingdom, his reply was, "Ye know not what ye ask? Are ye able to drink of my cup and share in my baptism?<sup>a</sup> You are aspiring to the reserved honors of those who suffer as I am to suffer; who for my sake go to the cross and the bloody tomb. To ask for the former is to ask for the latter also." Said Peter at another time, "We have *forsaken all* and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?"

<sup>a</sup> Matt. 20: 22.

Jesus' reply was "Ye which have *followed* me,"—and the connection shows that he meant it in the same sense of self-denial and suffering,—“in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” Matt. 19: 27-29. In Rom. 8: 16, 17, the two grades of heavenly blessedness for the two classes of the saints are distinctly specified. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we (all Christians) are the children of God. And if children heirs, heirs of God—and *joint heirs* with Christ if so be that we *suffer* with him, that we (Christ and his martyrs) may be also *glorified together*.” So Peter, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you—but rejoice inasmuch as ye are *partakers of Christ's sufferings*, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.” (1 Pet. 1: 12, 13.) Accordingly, it passed into a saying (*logos*) among the early Christians, which Paul emphatically declared to be a true one, “If we be dead with him we shall also live with him; if we *suffer* we shall also *reign* with him.” 2 Tim. 2: 12. In Revelation 1: 5, 6, John ascribes praise to Jesus Christ “who is the faithful witness (Gr. *Martyr*) the First begotten of the dead,—who loved us—and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father.” He is addressing his “companions in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.” And to those among the churches who were faithful in that time of persecution, Christ sent the special promises, “He that over-

cometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers, even as I received of my Father,"—i. e. he shall share in my royal authority, as predicted in the second Psalm. "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne." Rev. 2: 26, 27; 3: 21.

This reigning with Christ shall continue a "thousand years," evidently the same thousand as that of Satan's confinement.<sup>a</sup> Not that it shall then terminate, but that period is mentioned in order that the two may stand in contrast with each other. As during the martyr age Satan was reigning in the Beast and False Prophet, and the saints were humiliated and oppressed, so now for a thousand years he shall be humiliated and they shall reign. This reigning was the "judgment that was given to them," and the fulfillment of the words of Paul in 1 Cor. 6: 3, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" It is undoubtedly a figure taken from the triumphal honors decreed to illustrious conquerors and their generals, in which their vanquished foes were shown in dungeons or dragged in chains behind their victors.

<sup>a</sup> "The identity of this period of a thousand years with that of vs. 2, 3, which was unaccountably denied by Bengel, if it might otherwise be a matter of doubt and were not determinately fixed by the whole context, at all events is established by verse 7, where the thousand years cannot be conceived different from those in verse 3, and as little from those in the immediately preceding verses in vs. 4-6." Hengstenberg, vol. II, p. 337, note.



“This is the first resurrection.” Not of the body, for there is not a word said of this, and historically, we know that nothing of the sort took place at any time within the period referred to. The persons whom John saw were the *souls* of the martyrs, and it was these that lived and reigned. The word *anastasis* does not, of itself, imply a corporeal resurrection; its literal meaning, as will be shown hereafter, is the *second* or *future* life. The place where they lived and reigned was “with Christ”—*i. e.*, in heaven, not on earth. The meaning is, This is the peculiarly glorious and blessed *after-life*, succeeding the murderous blow of the Roman executioner, which shall be enjoyed by those who remained faithful till death.

It is called the *first* resurrection, not in point of *time*, but of rank and honor. This use of the Greek word is very common. It is translated chief in Matt. 20: 27; Mark 6: 21; 10: 44; Luke 19: 47; Acts 13: 50; 16: 12; 25: 2; 28: 7, 17; 1 Tim. 1: 15; etc. In Luke 15: 22, it is the *best*.

Hence in the original this resurrection is denoted by a phraseology differing from that which is applied to the resurrection of mankind in general. It is lost sight of in our English version, but it is a peculiarity of too much importance to be rightfully disregarded. The latter is usually styled simply the resurrection of the dead; that of Christ, and his martyrs the resurrection *from* or *from out of* the dead. So in the Vulgate, the *resurrectio a* or *ex mortuis* is distinguished from the *resurrectio mortuorum*. See Rom. 8: 11; 10: 7; Eph. 1: 20; Heb. 13: 20; 1 Pet. 1: 3; 21.



It implies that out of the whole number of the departed there shall be those who attain a peculiar honor, one which they do not share in common with the rest.

Being thus the most exalted state of future reward, it became the object of intensest desire on the part of persecuted saints. It was this, Paul says, which animated the martyrs of the former dispensation. They were "tortured, not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection." Heb. 11 : 35. Even for himself he declared that he made it the object of his most strenuous effort, "to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the *fellowship of his sufferings*, being made conformable to his death, if by any means he might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Gr. "the resurrection which is from among the dead). "Not," he adds, "as though I had already attained, either were already perfect,"—he had not yet won the martyr's crown by his death,— "but I follow after if that I may apprehend—pressing toward the mark for the *prize* of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Phil. 3 : 10-14.

It was the same inspiring hope that actuated the Christians of the succeeding centuries, and led them to seek the bloody crown of martyrdom, the pledge of the crown of victory above. "I beseech you," wrote Irenæus to his friends, "that you show not an unseasonable good will towards me. Suffer me to be food for the wild beasts, by whom I shall attain unto God. For I am the wheat of God, and I shall be ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be

found the pure bread of Christ.”<sup>a</sup> Such as attained this coveted honor were distinguished in painting by the aureole surrounding their heads, in token of the celestial crown which they had won. “It was conceived,” says Mosheim,<sup>b</sup> “that they were taken directly up into heaven and admitted to a share in the divine counsels and administration; that they sat as judges with God, enjoying the highest marks of his favor, and possessing influence sufficient to obtain from him whatever they might make the object of their prayers.” To the same effect testifies the sneering Gibbon.<sup>c</sup> “It is not easy to extract any distinct ideas from the vague though eloquent declarations of the Fathers, or to ascertain the degree of immortal glory and happiness which they so confidently promised to those who were so fortunate as to shed their blood in the cause of religion. They inculcated with becoming diligence that the fire of martyrdom supplied every defect and expiated every sin; that while the souls of ordinary Christians were obliged to pass through a slow and painful purification, the triumphant sufferers entered into the immediate fruition of eternal bliss, where in the society of the patriarchs, the apostles, and the prophets they reigned with Christ and acted as his assessors in the universal judgment of mankind.”<sup>d</sup> It is

<sup>a</sup> Epist. ad Romanos.

<sup>b</sup> Com. vol. I, p. 136.

<sup>c</sup> Chap. XVI.

<sup>d</sup> “Certatim gloriosa in certamina ruebantur, multique avidius tum martyria gloriosis mortibus querebantur quam nunc episcopatus pravis ambitionibus appetuntur.” Sulp. Severus 1: 11.

true that not a few ideas savoring of superstition and extravagance came to be attached to the boon of martyrdom, yet they grew out of the teachings of the Scriptures already referred to, and show the interpretation which in that age was given to passages regarded in modern times as obscure.

## SECTION VI.

## THE JUDGMENT OF THE DEAD.

The last five verses of this chapter are almost universally assumed to be a description of the General Judgment, at which the whole family of man will be judged, at the end of time. A careful study of the passage, however, in its connection, will disclose reasons for doubt as to whether that is its true import. Some very able scholars have taken a different view of it.<sup>a</sup>

1. In the first place, such an understanding of it impairs the *unity* of the narration. It can scarcely be denied that these verses are closely connected with the preceding, and therefore with all that portion of the book beginning with Chapter XII. If so, then we are to presume that they relate to the same general subject, viz: the overthrow and punishment of the persecutors of the church. It was not within the

<sup>a</sup> Grotius regards it as describing "the punishment of some antecedent to the General Judgment, as the glory of the martyrs precedes also that judgment"—*quorundam ergo poena judicium illud ultimum antecedit, sicut martyrum gloria antecedit idem judicium*.—He applies the happy New Jerusalem state which follows to the flourishing period of the church between Constantine and Justinian.

design of the author here to discuss the condition or character of the human family, as such. Why, then, should the course of the prophecy be interrupted or turned aside to set forth the ultimate destinies of the race? Not that the doctrine of a General Judgment is not true, but simply it was not relevant to the matter here in hand. As in so many cases, it is the costume and phraseology employed and not its position or relations in the discourse that has led to its being referred to so different a topic.<sup>a</sup> But for these, it may safely be said such a reference would never have been made. We have already seen how indispensable it is in prophetic interpretation that we keep clearly in mind the sources of the imagery employed, and the understanding they would have of it to whom its constant recurrence in their own Scriptures made it familiar.

2. The source of that imagery is plainly in Daniel 7: 9-11. Indeed the very great similarity between that entire chapter of the earlier prophecy and this part of the Apocalypse is recognized by all commentators. There, too, was a hideous persecuting wild Beast, the prototype, with variations, of the Beasts of Revelation, who made war with the saints and prevailed against them, until he was arrested by the avenging interposition of heaven. There, too, was a

<sup>a</sup> "An unseasonable comparison of Matt. 25: 31, et seq, where we find the righteous and the wicked united in one scene of judgment, and where the due distinction was not made between the substance and the dramatic form, has here been productive of much confusion, and has led to the dead being generally viewed as all the dead without exception." Hengstenberg *Apoc.* vol. ii, p. 376.

judgment scene exhibited not less majestic or sublime than the one before us. Let the two be placed side by side, that the striking resemblances between them may be the more apparent.

## DANIEL 7: 9-11.

I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, and his wheels *as* burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld *even* till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.

## REVELATIONS 20: 11-15.

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

In each of these cases we have the throne and One sitting upon it in resplendent majesty, the vast multitudes standing before it, the opened books of remembrance, the judgment, and the casting of the condemned into retributive fire. Now we *know*, because the interpreting angel positively assures us of it, that the first refers to the destruction of Daniel's Fourth Beast, in other words, to Antiochus Epiphanes, the great Syrian persecutor of the Jews, the prototype of Nero and the persecuting emperors of the Christians at Rome. Why should not the second have a like application to the latter? What else could they of the Seven churches, mostly Jewish in birth and education, and familiar from their childhood with the prophetic imagery of their Scriptures, understand by it?



3. The judgment here described is a judgment of *the dead only*; the General Judgment is to embrace both "*the quick and the dead*." Acts 10: 42; 2 Tim. 4: 1; 1 Peter 4: 5. The latter is to be preceded by the instantaneous change of the living into the immortal state (1 Cor. 15: 51; 1 Thess. 4: 17; Phil. 3: 21), and by the resurrection of the dead. John 5: 28, 29. But nothing of this kind is mentioned in connection with the judgment before us. - It is not the living nor the risen that are judged, but those who are *dead*. Four times is that term applied to them, as if to emphasize the fact, and distinguish this from that yet more comprehensive scene when the entire race of man are to receive their trial and award.

What, then, is the import of the passage?

As already remarked, I regard it as an integral part of the prophecy relating the overthrow and punishment of the persecutors of the church. The key to it is found in the fifth verse of the chapter. "*But the rest of the dead* lived not again until the thousand years were finished." We had been told the doom of the Beast and his allies, and the humiliation and binding of the Dragon whose servants they were. Next, we were shown the glorious reward of the martyrs and those who had proved faithful in this hour of great trial,—the blessed resurrection, the thrones, and the crowns to which they had attained. But what of "*the rest of the dead*"—viz. those who *did* worship the beast, and *did* join the deceived nations in their attack upon Christianity?

This clause of the fifth verse is evidently a paren-



thesis interposed in the description of the martyrs, for the momentary purpose of contrasting their state with that of the others. The narration goes immediately on, finishing that description, recounting the irruption and overthrow of Gog and Magog, and then taking up the subject so briefly hinted at and setting forth the doom of "the rest."

These, it is said, "lived not [again] until the thousand years were finished." The word "again" is without authority and should be omitted. Not that they were not in existence all this time, but that they did not have the blessed resurrection-life attained by the martyrs. Nor is it meant that they *did* so live after the completion of the thousand years. The designation of a time *before* which a thing was not done, does not of itself imply that it was done *after* that time. Instances of this mode of speech are very common in the Scriptures. 1 Sam. 15: 35, "Samuel came no more *until* the day of his death." Isa. 42: 4, "He shall not fail nor be discouraged *till* he have set judgment in the earth." Matt. 5: 18, "*Till* heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." Rom. 5: 13, "*Until* the law, sin was in the world." Matt. 1: 25, "And knew her not, *till* she had brought forth her first born son." <sup>a</sup>

This then was the judgment of *the dead*,—those

<sup>a</sup> "Helvidius abused greatly those words of St. Matthew (1: 25) 'He knew her not *until* she had brought forth her first born son,' thereby gathering against the honor of the Blessed Virgin, that a thing denied with special circumstances doth import an opposite affirmative, *when once that circumstance is expired.*" Hooker V. 45, 2, quoted in Wordsworth Apoc. p. 67.

who had been concerned in the persecutions of the church either as partisans or the victims of Satan. They are called "the dead" *par eminence*, to distinguish them from the martyrs who "lived" *par eminence*. The universality of the judgment corresponds to the universal dominion of Rome at that time; the phrase "the whole world" (τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην) of which Satan was the deceiver (Ch. 12: 9), being the well known designation of the Roman Empire. Luke 2: 1; Acts 11: 28; 17: 6; 24: 5. These, with Death and Hades—personifications before shown as connected with persecution (Ch. 6: 8)—and all whose names were not found in the register of the faithful, are cast into the lake of fire. This was the *second death*, contrasted again with the life of the martyrs, which was the *first resurrection*.

The import of this passage, then, as a whole, is very simple. God will destroy the persecutors of his people and reward the latter according to their fidelity or the opposite. It is a prophecy having special reference to the age in which John wrote; and while the general principles involved in it apply to all ages, its immediate and direct fulfillment was among the things which it was announced at the opening of the book must "*shortly* come to pass."

## CHAPTER V.

### THE AGE OF CONQUEST.

Thus far we have come in the history of the Kingdom under the two-fold guidance of Prophecy and Providence. The Parousia continues; Christ is present in his kingdom among men, and is steadily carrying forward the government which is in his hand toward the consummation.

That consummation is described generally in the glowing visions of the ancient prophets, and in numerous passages from our Lord's own sayings and the writings of the apostles. I shall presently speak of these more particularly. Suffice it to say here, that, while expressed in general, often symbolic, terms, it will be one equaling all that the most ardent hopes of man have ventured to anticipate. Indeed, it is expressly declared that neither the senses nor imagination of man are adequate to conceive of the glorious reality. Though the "thousand years" of Rev. 20 refer to another event, it is by no means to be understood that the world is not to have its *millennium*, in the sense usually denoted, of universal peace, rest, and felicity.

The question now is as to the methods by which that period is to be introduced; and in respect to this there are two theories.

The first is that it is to take place *suddenly*; ushered upon the world by a grand visible appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven, to destroy by his judgments all the wicked, and with glorious power and majesty set up his kingdom upon the earth. This is the view advocated by Adventists and Millenarians generally. For myself, I know of nothing to warrant it, or even to give it plausibility. As to any such "coming" of Christ, the Scriptures are silent. His real Parousia began eighteen hundred years ago, and we know nothing of any other. Or, if it did not, I can see no ground for expecting it now. In the elaborate calculations of prophetic arithmetic, which are so often advanced to prove its present near approach, I have no confidence. The "times" and "days" of Daniel and the Apocalypse have nothing to do with the subject, relating to things wholly and long ago past. The principle on which these periods, whatever they are, are converted into "years," has no sufficient authorization.<sup>a</sup> The date or dates from which it is customary to reckon them, are both uncertain in themselves and irrelevant to the matter in hand. The events in which it is expected they will issue, such as the arrest of the course of human affairs, the sudden end of this mundane sphere, the penal destruction of the unconverted, the conflagration of this globe, and the establishment of an earthly kingdom at Jerusalem or elsewhere in which he will reign bodily and visibly for a thousand years—all this seems to me without warrant from Scripture, to

<sup>a</sup>See Prof. Cowles's Dissertation appended to his Commentary on Ezekiel and Daniel, p. 459.

be derived from it only by violating the most obvious and fundamental principles of interpretation, and in direct contravention of what is positively taught us as to the true history and destiny of this world.

The other, and what I deem the true, view is that the consummation is to be reached by *development*, under the operation of established laws, and may, therefore, require many years, perhaps centuries, for its attainment.

1. For, first, our Lord has expressly asserted this to be the mode of progress in his kingdom. We have before cited some of his words on this subject. "It is," said he, "as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise, night and day, and the seed should spring and *grow up*,—first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." "It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which when it is sown in the earth is less than all the seeds that be in the earth, but when it is sown it groweth up and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches, so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it." Mark 4: 26–32. "It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened." Matt. 13: 33. In other words, development from within, growth from its own divinely implanted law of life, is the mode of that kingdom's advancement. We do not mean that there is not a constant providential superintendence over it, guarding and guiding it, and above all a constant ministry of the Holy Spirit, quickening its life, and supplying ever new vital forces, but that all this



is under the normal law of the Kingdom. Now, it seems to me in the highest degree unreasonable to assume that Christ is going to violate or ignore this principle which he has himself so clearly enunciated, and by a sudden interference, with miracle and violence, arrest this established course of things and introduce another. He will not devastate the growing field, and instantaneously *create* a crop. He will not throw away the "stone cut out without hands," and let down from heaven the mighty mountain which is to fill the whole earth. To do so is to confess his own law of growth a failure, or to manifest a capriciousness of plan and purpose inconsistent with the character of Him "with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning."

2. What was thus asserted in principle as the law of growth in Christ's Kingdom, has been confirmed in fact. It is now two thousand years, nearly, since that kingdom was first established, and during all this period the vital forces implanted in it have been working; and it is these, under the fostering care of God's providence and Spirit, which have resulted in what we see to-day of the majestic prevalence and power of Christianity. Never has there been any sudden intervention of extraordinary force in its behalf, to remove obstacles, to save from disasters, to destroy enemies, or to impart miraculous powers. All pretenses of that sort recorded in medieval legends or the lives of the saints, are myths, unworthy of a moment's serious attention. Read the Acts of the Apostles, the genuine writings of the Christian Fathers, the records of



authentic history, and you discern in them the operation of the same spiritual forces, and only the same, which we see at work in our own day. From the scenes of the day of Pentecost which ushered in the new Kingdom, to the Reformation under Luther and Calvin and Knox, and the revivals attending the preaching of Edwards and Whitefield and Wesley, and our own Moody and Sankey, the story of salvation has ever been one and the same. Men have been sanctified through the truth. Through the foolishness of preaching God has saved them that believe. The Lord has daily added the saved to the church. And what has been we have every reason to believe will be, save that there may be increase in the rate of progress. Nations, by and by, will be born in a day, nevertheless, they will be *born* as they always were,—as individual souls are—by the Spirit of God, through belief of the truth. There never has been any other mode of spiritual conquest for the kingdom of our Lord, and there is no warrant for believing there ever will be.

3. This fundamental law of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, receives strong confirmation from the demonstrations of science in respect to the *physical history* of the globe. The crust of the earth has been subjected to innumerable changes in the long lapse of ages. Systems of rock-formations have followed systems, each with its distinctive fossils, vegetable and animal; every point of the earth's surface has been again and again alternately submerged under the ocean, and elevated above it; climates the most diverse have prevailed, including even torrid arctics and frigid

tropics; races of plants and animals, ranging from the humblest seaweed to the California pine, from the microscopic ocean shell, through successive tribes of mollusks, fishes, saurians, and mammals, have come into being, have lived and died and become extinct. Man, the present lord of creation, is but "of yesterday," the youngest, as he is the highest, of these works of God. Yet this immeasurable series of changes, affecting both the earth and its inhabitants, has been wrought, as is now well established, by natural causes, ordained by the Creator indeed, but working each slowly and progressively according to its own law. Theories of catastrophes and "cataclysms" changing suddenly the condition of the globe, or of its flora and fauna, except to a very limited extent, are now almost wholly discarded. Says Sir Charles Lyell, than whom there is no higher authority on these matters, "I see no reason for supposing that any part of the revolutions in physical geography—indicate any catastrophe greater than those which the present generation has witnessed."<sup>a</sup> And Professor Dawson, "In all the lapse of geological time there has been an absolute uniformity of natural law. The same grand machinery of force and matter has been in use throughout all the ages, working out the great plan. Yet the plan has been progressive and advancing, nevertheless. The uniformity has been in the methods; the results have presented a wondrous diversity and development."<sup>b</sup> Now, I concede that this is not proof that a similar

<sup>a</sup> *Antiquity of Man*, p. 287.

<sup>b</sup> *Story of the Earth and Man*, p. 3.

law of progress prevails in God's spiritual kingdom, but it certainly creates a strong presumption in its favor. It is the same God who worketh all in all. He is not restricted in time, as man is; he can take enough for all he desires. He has eternity for his working day, and needs no *coups de main*, no sudden surprises, for the accomplishment of his vast designs. Invisible in his own being to the eyes of his creatures, he is invisible also in the methods by which he acts; making it his glory "to conceal a matter," till the grand results thereof are matured and may be exhibited in their perfection and beneficence to his admiring universe.

In hinting at the course of this progressive development,—for I can do no more—we have but little help from revelation. Prophecy while so full and impassioned in describing the consummation itself, gives but the merest glimpse of the several steps or stages that are to lead to it. I venture to suggest only the following:

1. Christianity is to become *universal* throughout the earth. This implies, first, that its territory and population are to become known to Christian nations. In this view, the career of discovery, which may be dated from the time of Columbus, has been closely allied with the advancement of the gospel. In these four hundred years, a new continent has been found, explored, colonized, and to a large extent christianized. The discovery of the Cape of Good Hope and of the passage to India, has opened all Southern and Eastern Asia to the knowledge, the commerce and

the religion of Europe. Captain Cook sailed round the world, and made known the innumerable islands of the Pacific, where, since then, nations of cannibals have been raised from the deepest degradation, and made living witnesses of the transforming power of the gospel. Even Africa, so long hermetically sealed and hopelessly bound in the fetters of fetichism and slavery, is now revealing its mysteries, and showing us new missionary fields, inviting immediate occupation, of the most promising character. And, in general, I think it may be safely said, in view of the vastly improved methods of navigation and travel, the spirit of scientific inquiry, the enlarged demands of commerce, and the increase of missionary zeal throughout all branches of the Christian church, that within less than fifty years, the entire territory of our habitable globe will have been explored and opened to the access of the gospel.

2. Christianity is to become the *sole religion* of mankind. It is even now the only one which is making any progress in the world. All the old systems of the East, though still holding in their embrace a majority of the race, are fast sinking into decrepitude, and wherever they come into contact with Christianity, are falling before it. Mohammedanism sleeps in its fatalistic sensualism, with no power to resist the encroachment of Western nations. Brahminism finds its Vedas convicted of false science and philosophy, in the presence of the Christian Scriptures. Buddhism, Confucianism and Sintism can no longer shut themselves away from the light behind the barriers of

national exclusiveness. The grosser forms of idolatry, prevailing among savage tribes, all yield at the approach of the gospel borne to them from the lands of civilization. Look the world over, and we can find no system of false religion propagating itself as in past ages, none aggressive as against other systems, none even holding its own against the progress of Christianity. Here, too, we risk little in the prophecy that a single hundred years from the present time may see the latter the only religion of the world recognized as true.

3. Christianity is to be greatly *intensified in power*. It is to bring those who are subject to it to a higher plane of experience, a more intelligent devotion to Christ's service, a more symmetrical and perfect type of character. It is to make conquests among the unconverted, gathering them in rich, continuous harvests into the kingdom of the Lord. Children of pious parents are to grow up into Christ from their birth. Revivals are to be multiplied with a power and pervasiveness such as the world has not before seen. Sectarian dissensions in the church are to diminish in bitterness, and Christian love and unity show their blessed fruits, removing what has for ages been one of the chief hindrances to the advancement of the truth, and increasing the power of the church a hundred fold for conquests over infidelity, and all intrenched and organized forms of evil. To a student of religious history, the progress which has been made during the last hundred years in all these respects appears no way inferior to that which has been witnessed in



all the other departments of the world's career. It has been a century of revivals, such as no former age has known. In our own country, vast as has been the growth of population, the increase of evangelical churches, both in numbers and membership, has been in a still larger ratio. It has been the era of missions, which, from the humblest beginnings, have now belted the globe with their stations and their churches of native converts. It has introduced a new age of benevolence, teaching that no man liveth to himself, that Christianity is, in its essence, the following of Christ, the Master, in his work of saving men. It has, we doubt not, elevated the standard of individual Christian character, and promoted through society as a whole a more intelligent faith and a purer morality. Vast as are the evils that remain, numerous and gross as are the crimes which shock us, they are still less prevalent, as compared with the population, than in any former age that can be named since the time when an inspired pen drew that awful portraiture in the first chapter of Romans of the state of society in the capital and mistress of the world. In a word, the gospel is beginning to *mature its fruit*; and it only needs such pentecostal outpourings of the Spirit as we have already seen some small earnest of, and as, we believe, are soon to be multiplied beyond all precedent, to give it an intensity as well as spread of power, that shall, ere many centuries pass, bring the whole population of the globe within its saving efficacy.

4. Christianity become thus universal and potent



in its sway over men as individuals, is to pervade *all the forces* that mold human character and affect the condition of the world. Among these forces are government, law, education, science, art, philosophy, commerce, fashion, domestic economy, employments, etc. We have only to conceive of all these as made thoroughly Christian, as they will when men themselves become such, to see that under them this will become literally a "new world." What mighty wastes of all that constitutes the world's life, through war, and oppression, and lust, and robbery, and crime of all sorts, will be stayed! What inconceivable increase of all that will tend to make it purer and better, will accrue! How rapid will then be its progress in subduing the wildernesses, enlarging the habitable area of the earth, multiplying wealth, increasing the means of living and the average duration of life, elevating the tastes and the pleasures of mankind, ennobling their aspirations, in a word, uplifting the family of man, and realizing for him the rapturous predictions of the prophets as to the latter-day blessedness and glory of the earth! We have no doubt that it is in precisely this way that those predictions are to reach their fulfillment. The earth itself is to be regenerated morally and physically, the latter through the former. God is going to make new heavens and a new earth, but he will do it not by sudden miracle, but by the hands of the renewed and sanctified inhabitants of the earth. He is to be in the hearts of men as the new Creator who makes all things new. It is thus that his tabernacle is to be with them, and he will

dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE CONSUMMATION.

“Then cometh the ΕΝΔ, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” 1 Cor. 15: 24-26.

The word end—τὸ τέλος—may signify either the termination of a thing, or its consummation, that in which it eventuates. Instances of the latter meaning are the following: Matt. 26: 28, “Peter went in to see the end,” i. e. the result or outcome of the proceedings. Rom. 6: 21, “The end of those things is death.” James 5: 11, “Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord,” i. e. the issue which God gave to his trials. 1 Peter 1: 9, “Receiving the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.” Also 2 Cor. 11: 15; Phil. 3: 19; Heb. 6: 8; 1 Pet. 4: 17; etc.

I take it that this is the meaning of the word in this place, as denoting the issue or consummation of Christ’s reign as King. We shall presently see reasons which forbid us to understand it in the other sense,—that of cessation. It was the object of the apostle in this sublime chapter of the resurrection, not to say

*how long* Christ would reign, but what should be its result, the climax of all his victories over sin and hell. As death is the consummation of all the evils that can happen to man on earth; as all sin and pain and woe precede and find their culmination in this, so the saving power of Christ reaches equally far, and having overcome all other woes delivers him at last from the power of death itself.

To appreciate fully this language of the apostle we must recur, as in former cases, to the conceptions of the Jews as to the origin of sin and death. Whatever modern skepticism may say on the subject, the devil was a very real being in their system of belief. It was in his temptation of our first parents that sin originated, and death as the fruit of sin. From that time, he is represented as having a kingdom on earth antagonistic to the kingdom of Jehovah. Matt. 12: 26; Luke 11: 18. He is called "the god of this world," (2 Cor. 4: 4), and "the prince of this world," John 12: 31; 14: 30; 16: 11. Other evil spirits subject to his authority are called "his angels." Matt. 25: 41. He is "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience." Eph. 2: 2. He is the leader of "principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, spirits of wickedness in high places." Eph. 6: 12; Rom. 8: 38. In this capacity of the prince of evil he is ever active in inciting to sin. He filled the heart of Ananias and Sapphira to lie to the Holy Ghost. Acts 6: 3. He prompted Judas to betray his Lord. John 13: 2. He instigated the hostility of the Pharisees to Jesus. John 8: 44.

He afflicted men with disease, evil possessions, and all kinds of suffering. Acts 10 : 38. And as his crowning terror, he had the "power of death" by which he kept men all their lives in bondage. Heb. 2 : 14.

Now, in conformity with these representations of the power and malevolence of Satan, we find that the work of Christ as King and Saviour is described as the defeat of Satan and the destruction of his kingdom. The first grand prophecy of the future was that the seed of the tempted and sinning woman should bruise the tempter's head. When Jesus began his works of mercy, he cast out devils. When the Seventy returning from their mission reported the wonderful fact that they had power to do the same, their Master exulted in spirit as already witnessing the downfall of the enemy's kingdom. "I beheld," said he, "Satan as lightning falling from heaven." Luke 10 : 18. It was his to "bind the strong man, and despoil him of his goods." Matt. 12 : 29. It was "for this very purpose that he was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3 : 8. Nay, even the last and most dreaded power of the great adversary should be wrested from him. Jesus himself died "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. 2 : 14, 15.

It is precisely the same truth, then, I cannot doubt, which is meant to be asserted in this chapter of the resurrection. This is the end, the consummation, when the reigning Messiah shall have wrested from

Satan his usurped kingdom over man, and delivered it to the Father from whom it was stolen, having put down (Gr. brought to nought) all rebellious rule, authority and power. For by the scope of his appointment as Messianic King, he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last, the supreme one of all is death.

From the Jewish—which is, too, the Bible—standpoint, then, no more pregnant prophecy of the coming era of holiness and blessedness could have been uttered than the subjugation of the kingdom of Satan, the putting down of all evil rule, authority, and power. It will be in truth a millennium, not of duration but of glory, of which the far inferior thousand years of his binding in the abyss, that ended his one work of making war on the church, were but a faint type and pledge. That was to end persecution; this will end all his devilish work on earth. That ended his career for ever as a foe in arms, reeking with the blood of the saints; this will end it in his whole character and capacity as an enemy of God and his kingdom on earth.

I will not presume to imagine what this world will become when sin is destroyed, and when all its inhabitants and all its forces shall become holy to the Lord. Under the inspiration of such a theme, the prophets labored with raptures unutterable. Language was all too poor to set forth the wonders that beamed upon their ecstatic vision. All sublime imagery, all grouping of what was beauty to the eye, and melody to the ear, of what was grateful to sense, and inciting to expectation, and assuring to hope, was used by them, and when they



had said all, it remained to add that "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

So shall be accomplished the Kingly function of the Lord under his Parousia. It is a work begun at his ascension, carried forward through the successive ages of persecution, conquest, and victory, and then perpetuated in a reign of righteousness and blessedness for ever. I hope to show that his associated works as the Life-Giver and Judge are complementary and auxiliary to this, the three together constituting the work of that Parousia which he promised to his people, and which he bade them make their inspiration and their hope.

"Earth, thou grain of sand on the shore of the universe of God; thou Bethlehem amongst the princely cities of the heavens; thou art and remainest the loved one amongst ten thousand suns and worlds, the chosen of God! Thee will he again visit, and then thou wilt prepare a throne for him, as thou gavest him a manger cradle. In his radiant glory thou wilt rejoice, as thou didst once drink his blood and tears, and mourn his death. On thee has the Lord a great work to complete!"<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Pressel, quoted by Geikie, *Life of Christ* vol. 2, p. 608.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE PERPETUITY OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM.

The views I have advanced in the preceding chapters will be objected to on the ground that they omit all mention of the Resurrection and General Judgment, as related to the consummation of Christ's Kingdom; also, as being inconsistent with the commonly received doctrines of his ultimate surrender of that Kingdom to the Father, and the end of the present world. The first two of these topics I have purposely deferred for consideration by themselves; the remaining two may appropriately be considered here.

The doctrine of the surrender by Christ of his Kingdom to the Father is stated by Dr. Hodge, thus: "That dominion to which he was exalted after his resurrection, when all power in heaven and earth was committed into his hands—this kingdom which he exercises as the Theanthropos, and which extends over all principalities and powers, he is to deliver up when the work of redemption is accomplished. He was invested with this dominion in his mediatorial character, for the purpose of carrying on the work to its consummation. When that is done, *i. e.* when he has subdued all his enemies, then he will no longer reign over the universe as mediator."<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Com. 1 Cor. 15: 24.

This is surely a remarkable doctrine. That so great a change should take place in the relations of the Persons of the Godhead to each other and to man; that the work of redemption, founded in such a sacrifice and carried forward under the administration of the Holy Spirit, should like a human undertaking have run through its career and be ready to vanish away, is one that tasks all our powers to conceive of. That a reign so august should cease at the moment of victory; that a throne should be abandoned just when it becomes an undisputed one; that a kingdom should be given up when it has attained universal peace and rest, are propositions, to be received indeed if sufficiently revealed, but in support of which we certainly have a right to demand the very clear testimony of God's word.

It is no less astonishing that such a truth, if it be a truth, is supposed to be taught in but a single passage of the Scriptures. Christ himself, when so fully predicting the events of his Parousia, gives not a hint of the kind. The Seer of Patmos caught not a glimpse of it in all the grand apocalypse disclosed to him. None of the apostolic writers, save one, makes the slightest allusion to it, and he only in a single incidental remark while discussing another topic. Of course, all this does not disprove its truth, but it does excite our surprise, and warrant a very careful examination of the passage supposed to teach it.

That passage is the one before considered in part in 1 Cor. 15 : 24, 25, 28. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.—For he must reign till he hath put all

enemies under his feet.—And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

I have already adduced reasons, which seem to me demonstrative, for understanding the “kingdom” here mentioned, not of Christ’s own received by him at his ascension, but of the usurped but now subdued kingdom of Satan. I submit that this view better harmonizes with the apostolic subject and course of thought, which are Christ’s victory over the Prince of death, thereby obtaining a new resurrection life for his people.

The declaration “He must reign *till* he hath put all enemies under his feet,” does not imply that he will *not* reign after that. See remarks on this mode of expression on page 157.

The translation of the 28th verse, in our version, does not conform to the order of the words as they stand in the Greek,—τότε καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ υἱὸς ὑποταγέσεται. The emphatic word is τότε, *then*, making prominent the time referred to. This is qualified by καὶ, *also*, connecting it with the previous time, and showing that what is affirmed shall be true *then also* as it had been before. The victorious Messiah will still hold a delegated throne as he had previously done, his kingdom having been received from his Father. Dan. 7: 14; Luke 19: 12; 22: 29; John 5: 22, 27; Eph. 1: 20–23; Phil. 2: 9–11; Heb. 1: 4; Rev. 3: 21. But our common version renders καὶ as if connected with υἱὸς, the *Son also*, i. e. as well as the “all things,”—which

makes the passage imply that his authority had *not* before been a delegated one ; that the subordination *then* first takes place, which we know is not the truth. This subjection, then, after his victory over Satan, no more implies a surrender of his kingdom to the Father than it ever had done. It was from the first a kingdom *given* to him, held in subordination to the Father's will ; and such, even after his last crowning victory over his enemy and man's, it will continue to be.

While the passage, then, in its terms, does not, on careful examination, teach the alleged doctrine of Christ's surrender of his kingdom, there are many other facts which absolutely forbid such an interpretation.

1. It is often and with the utmost emphasis affirmed that his kingdom *is to be without end*.

“The God of heaven,” said Daniel, “shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed ; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.” “There was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him : his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.” Dan. 2 : 44 ; 7 : 14. “Unto us a child is born ; unto us a Son is given ; and the government shall be upon his shoulder. \* \* \* Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from hence-

forth even for ever." Isa. 9: 6, 7. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1: 32, 33. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews quotes from the XLVth psalm and expressly applies to Christ in his mediatorial kingdom the words of David, "To the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Heb. 1: 10. In the Apocalypse, John blends with his salutation to the churches the solemn doxology, "Unto him that loved us, and hath washed us from our sins in his own blood, \* \* \* to him be glory and dominion for ever, Amen." Rev. 1: 5, 6. At the sounding of the seventh angel, which signalizes the very epoch before us, when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ,"—even in that moment of supreme victory, it is declared, not that his dominion shall now be surrendered, but that "he shall reign for ever and ever." Rev. 11: 15. And in the New Jerusalem state, which is universally conceded to be subsequent to the grand consummation and the delivery of the kingdom to the Father, we find the Son still on the throne, shedding the light of his glory upon the redeemed, and receiving their worship for ever. "The Lord God Almighty—and the Lamb are the temple of it." "The glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof," etc. Rev. 21: 22, 23.



It is not, of course, to be supposed that these passages are overlooked or disregarded by those who believe in the surrender of Christ's kingdom, and his ceasing to reign as Mediator. Their idea is that after that event, when the redeemed of earth are all gathered in safety into heaven, and all sin is put down or destroyed, when God alone will "rule with majesty serene and undisturbed,"<sup>a</sup> Christ will then be, in a subordinate sense, "head and sovereign"<sup>b</sup> over his people; and that it is this fact only which is intended to be taught in the passages quoted. Viewing the state of blessedness which they will have attained in heaven after death and judgment and the ending of all sin and all the powers of sin as a "kingdom," still under Christ's immediate care, that this kingdom will never end,—which is simply saying that the happiness of the redeemed will be eternal. But while this is an undoubted and glorious truth, it does not seem possible to make it that which these passages mean to affirm. If we can understand the nature of a mediatorial kingdom,—a kingdom of grace, wherein are exercised the divine prerogatives of giving the Spirit, intercession, pardon, and justification,—a kingdom, having indeed its throne in heaven at the right hand of the Father, but existing and carried forward here on earth,—the kingdom of heaven among men,—it is this kingdom that is referred to in these predictions of its perpetuity.

Look again at the language. It was the kingdom

<sup>a</sup> Kling, in Lange's Com. 1 Cor. 15: 1-28; p. 318.

<sup>b</sup> Hodge, Com. on 1 Cor., p. 330.

that was to be set up "in the days of these kings," and that "should break in pieces and consume" all earthly kingdoms, that should stand for ever. This, most surely, was the mediatorial kingdom, the conquering and subduing kingdom, and it is of this that the perpetuity is affirmed. Is not "the increase of his government and peace" something to be realized in time? Does not the "throne of David" represent his kingdom among men, and the "house of Jacob," his universal earthly church? The throne which belongs to the Son for ever and ever—is it not one which, according to the argument in Heb. 1: 8, pertains to him as Mediator? Surely, there can be no doubt on this point. Indeed, we know of nothing in all the range of the Scriptures, apart from this solitary text, which warrants or suggests any such distinction between Christ's reign as Mediator, and that which is to be given him after delivering up the kingdom. Is it,—and we ask with the utmost deference for the judgment of the eminent theologians who have maintained it—any thing more than a device for reconciling these passages with the *assumed* finite duration of his earthly kingdom, involved in the greater assumption of the finite duration of this world where it is to be?

In the closing visions of Isaiah, which are universally held to relate to Christ's kingdom, the blessedness and glory of that kingdom are set forth under the figure of "new heavens and a new earth,"—and the description which follows shows that reference must be had to a state of things on earth. Isa. 65: 17-25. It is then added that that state of things shall be perpetual.

Isa. 66 : 22, 23. "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." There can be no question, surely, of the meaning of this prophecy. The church of God, the spiritual and holy seed of Abraham constituting a new Jerusalem, shall maintain his worship from age to age, in which all the living family of man shall engage, having ever before them, as typified in the ceaseless burnings of the Vale of Hinnom, the punishment of the wicked. "They shall *remain before me*, saith the Lord"; language excluding the idea of a termination. "The idea is," says Mr. Barnes, "that the state of things here described would be permanent and abiding."

Besides these express testimonies to the perpetuity of Christ's kingdom, there are other considerations of scarcely less weight. That kingdom he received as a *reward* for his humiliation and sufferings in the work of redemption. "Wherefore, God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is *Lord*, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2: 9-11. But is that reward to cease the moment in which the work for which it is bestowed is completed? "Are not the gifts and calling

of God without repentance? Shall he so soon grow weary of honoring his Son? Shall the obedience of his people be crowned with eternal rewards, and the obedience of his Son unto death, even the death of the cross, be crowned with only a temporary dominion and glory? And shall he cease to be Lord and King at the very time that every knee shall bow to him and every tongue confess that he is Lord? Shall that kingdom which he first purchased with his own blood, and then secured to himself by putting down all rule and all authority and power opposed to his reign, be surrendered at the very moment when every tongue shall confess that he is the rightful sovereign of the universe?"<sup>a</sup>

It is, perhaps, another form of the same truth which is given in the statement that Christ was "appointed *heir* of all things." Heb. 1: 2. Compare Matt. 11: 27; 28: 18; John 17: 2, 7, 9, 22. That is, he received from the Father the created universe, to be possessed and governed by him, as a son receives a patrimony from his father. What else can be denoted by this figure than his perfect and perpetual right to that which he inherits? If the father takes back what is thus given, he disinherits his son. Is Christ then, the moment he comes into full and undisputed possession of his kingdom, to be disinherited? Is the temporary occupancy thus implied all that is meant, —a tenure which, as compared with the eternity which follows, is barely for a moment?

Further; it is the participation of the honors and

<sup>a</sup> Van Valkenburgh, in Am. Bib. Rep. Oct. 1839, p. 442.

the felicity of this kingdom which is to constitute the blessedness of the redeemed. They are to be "joint-heirs with Christ;" to "sit with him in his throne;" to "reign with Christ;" to be partakers of the glory given him by the Father, etc. Rom. 8: 17; Rev. 3: 21; 2 Tim. 2: 12; John 17: 22. What, then, is to become of their reward if this kingdom is transient,—if it is to be surrendered to the Father and be held by Christ himself no more?

It is to be remembered, also, that Christ's office as Priest is expressly declared to be eternal. Nothing can be more certain than that this office pertains to him as Mediator, and its exercise is one of the functions of his mediatorial kingdom. It implies that its administration is based on the great sacrifice offered by him for sin, the presentation of that sacrifice before his Father's throne in behalf of his people, and the sovereign act of justification bestowed on them because of their acceptance thereof by faith. But these priestly offices of the Redeemer are never to cease. He is "a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek." He "ever (*πάντοτε*) liveth to make intercession for them." "The Son who is consecrated forever more," etc. Heb. 5: 6; 7: 17, 21, 25, 28. And in the New Jerusalem itself, "the river of the water of life," the emblem of the eternal blessedness of the saints, "proceedeth out of the throne of God *and the Lamb*,"—a recognition of the priestly character of the Redeemer as the everlasting source of life and salvation to men.

I will cite only one more passage bearing on this topic, which it seems to me is of itself absolutely



decisive against the common view. In the twelfth of Hebrews, the apostle is warning his brethren in the most solemn manner against the rejection of the gospel. He reminds them of the doom of those who rejected the Mosaic dispensation at Sinai,—a dispensation inaugurated by lightnings and earthquakes in token of the awful presence of Jehovah. “The whole mount quaked greatly.” Ex. 19: 18. But the new dispensation of the Messiah is grander than that because more abiding. This he proves from a passage in Haggai 2: 6. “Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.” And this phrase he says, “yet once more”—ἐτι ἅπαξ—indicates a change—μετάθεσιν—(literally, a passing away) of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” In other words, the divine arrangement is to be changed but *once*, i. e. when the Mosaic gives place to the Messianic,—of course, then, the latter is to continue unchanged. “Wherefore,” he adds, “we receiving a kingdom *which cannot be moved*, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably and with godly fear.” We cannot well conceive any thing more decisive than this. Not only the terms themselves but the argument requires the perpetuity of Christ’s kingdom. To affirm that another *metathesis* will take place, by which it shall come to an “end,” in the sense of a termination, seems to us to be, if any thing can be, an explicit contradiction of the inspired word of God.

The conclusion which we have now reached will



doubtless be assailed with yet more confidence from another quarter. It will be held to be inconsistent with the doctrine, supposed to be revealed in the Scriptures, of the *end of the world*. That certainly cannot be an everlasting kingdom *on earth*, if the earth itself is to be destroyed, and the duration of man upon it in the present order of things is to cease. Let it not be considered improper, then, to inquire what the Scriptures really teach us on this subject.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE END OF THE WORLD.

The phrase is not unfrequently found in the New Testament. Matt. 13: 39, 40, 49. "The harvest is the end of the world." Matt. 24: 3, "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world?" Matt. 28: 20, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Heb. 9: 26, "Now once in the end of the world (Gr. worlds), hath he appeared to put away sin." 1 Cor. 10: 11, "They are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world (Gr. worlds) are come."

The original word here translated world is *αἰών*, which, as all who are tolerably conversant with Jewish phraseology know, has no reference to the earth as a planet. It is properly a designation of *time*, nearly corresponding to our word *age*. The Jews regarded all time as divided into successive periods to which they applied this term, such as that which preceded creation, the ante-diluvian, the one covered by the duration of the Mosaic theocracy, and that in which the Messiah was to reign. This is probably its meaning in Heb. 1: 2; "By whom—Christ—he made the worlds, i. e., he established and carried through the orderly succession of the ages."<sup>a</sup> The last two of these

<sup>a</sup> Tayler Lewis's *Six Days of Creation*, pp. 353, 355.

periods are most frequently mentioned in the Scriptures. Living, as the sacred writers did, under the Mosaic dispensation, they denominated its period as “the *aion* that now is,” and that of the Messiah, then future, as “the *aion* that is to come.” The two together, covering the whole duration of the future, came to be equivalent to that duration, in other words, *everlasting*,—as in the declaration, “Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world (*aion*) neither in the world(*aion*) to come.” Matt. 11: 32. When, passing the boundaries of time, they wished to speak of eternal things, as of the retributions of the righteous and the wicked, or of the existence of God, they intensified the idea by reduplications of the same word. “To him be glory for ever and ever” (Gr. through ages of ages). Gal. 1: 5; Phil. 4: 20; 1 Tim. 1: 17; 1 Peter 5: 11. “They shall reign with him forever.” Rev. 22: 5. “The smoke of their torment ascendeth forever.” Rev. 14: 11; 19: 3; 20: 10. In Eph. 3: 21, the expression is still more remarkable. “Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end,”—Gr. “through all generations of the *aion* of the *aions*,” εἰς πᾶσας τὰς γενεὰς τοῦ αἰῶνος τῶν αἰώνων.<sup>a</sup>

When our Lord and his apostles, therefore, spoke of the “end of the world,” they used the word, we cannot doubt, in the sense that was customary in that day,

<sup>a</sup> See an able and most valuable exhibition of the import of this word in Prof. Tayler Lewis’s “Six Days of Creation,” pp. 352-385.

the only sense in which it was possible to have been understood by those whom they addressed. The parable of the tares, like nearly all the others delivered by our Saviour in that stage of his ministry, was designed to teach the contrast between the coming kingdom of heaven and that under which they had hitherto lived. Of the latter, all were reckoned as subjects who were of the seed of Abraham, whether strictly righteous or not. This was the one ground of pride and self-confidence among the Jews that constantly hindered their reception of the gospel. John had to dash it in pieces in those fearful words, "Ye brood of vipers—think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father." A large part of the Sermon on the Mount is directed to the same end. So with these parables. In the field which God had first sown by Moses with good seed, the tares were then growing with the wheat, and in that closing portion of the age greatly outnumbered and choked it. But in the end of that age, i. e., under his own new kingdom of heaven, a different law would prevail. None could be a member of that kingdom but by a new birth, higher than any earthly pedigree. John 3: 3. Not saying, "Lord, Lord," would make one a subject of it, but doing the will of God. Matt. 7: 21. All others would be gathered out of his field, and cast like a fruitless tree or winnowed chaff into the fire. This was what Malachi had predicted of the times of the Messiah (Matt. 3: 2, 5; 4: 1)—and John, when preaching the near approach of the kingdom. Matt. 3: 7-12. To the same effect was the parable of the

drag-net. And the time and the signs when this great change should take place,—when the old imperfect Jewish aion should be superseded by the new spiritual aion to come, were what the disciples inquired about, on the Mount of Olives, after Christ had uttered his denunciations against the city and temple, which they evidently understood as referring to that event. It seems to me plain that no reference could have been intended by them to the destruction of the earth as a planet, or its discontinuance as an abode for mankind, and no doctrine of that sort is taught by the phrase they used.

On the other hand, taking the Greek word which was used by the sacred writers when they meant to speak of the earth, either as a planet, or as the abode of man—*κόσμος*—we find no “end” any where asserted of it. Matt. 4: 8, “All the kingdoms of the world.” 13: 35, “From the foundation of the world.” Luke 11: 5, “From the beginning of the world.” John 17: 5, “Before the world was.” Acts 17: 24, “God that made the world and all things therein.” Rom. 1: 8, “Your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world,” etc. I repeat it, of the world in this sense—*κόσμος*—no end is ever asserted or implied. There is no such phrase as the end or completion of the *κόσμος*.<sup>a</sup> And yet it is in this sense of the term world, that the phrase is commonly understood. A predicate

<sup>a</sup> In 2 Pet. 3: 6 the word is applied to the antediluvian “world,” which it is declared perished (*apoleto*) in the deluge. Obviously it was not the earth as a *planet*, but its inhabitants, that was meant.

which belongs solely to *one* word is without any warrant transferred to *another* of entirely different meaning, simply because both are unfortunately represented by the same English word "world," and from this unauthorized combination, is made to teach an idea which probably never entered the thought of any inspired author whatever.

There is, however, a remarkable passage in 2 Peter 3: 3-13, which is constantly referred to and relied upon as teaching the doctrine before us beyond all question. "The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.—The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.—The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat."

In endeavoring to ascertain the meaning of this important passage, it may be remarked:

1. That we are not to interpret the language according to the revelations of modern science. Geology and Astronomy have taught us many facts as to the nature and history of our globe and of the material universe, of which the ancients were wholly ignorant. They supposed the earth to be a vast plain resting upon immovable foundations, (2 Sam. 22: 16; Job 38: 4; Ps. 104: 5; Prov. 8: 29; Isa. 24: 18; 40: 21; 51: 13; Jer. 31: 37; Mic. 6: 2); the heavens a "firmament" or solid expanse, to which the sun, moon, and stars were fastened as luminous disks, and from which



they might be detached and fall to the ground like the leaves of autumn. Gen. 1: 7, 17; Isa. 42: 5; Job 37: 18; Rev. 6: 13, 14. The idea that these were worlds or heavenly bodies, in our sense of these terms, had then probably never entered the mind of any man except, possibly, some speculating student of the stars. Hence, I cannot accept the translation given by Alford of the word "elements," as "the heavenly bodies." Peter most assuredly knew nothing of any such bodies, and could not have meant to express such an idea.

2. The passage cannot mean that the material universe, or our earth and its skies, is to be *annihilated*. For the "new heavens and the new earth," which the apostle says were promised to succeed, are certainly the same material world as the present. That promise is in Isa. 65: 17-25, which upon any reasonable interpretation is clearly something that is to be realized on this existing earth. "It could not be demonstrated from this phrase (burnt up)" says Mr. Barnes, "that the world would be annihilated by fire; it could be proved only that it will undergo important changes. So far as the action of fire is concerned, the *form* of the earth may pass away, and its aspect be changed; but unless the direct power which created it interposes to annihilate it, the *matter* which now composes it will still be in existence. Whether it is God's purpose to *annihilate* any portion of the matter he has made, does not appear from his word."<sup>a</sup>

It is sometimes alleged that stars have disappeared from the visible heavens,—some apparently in a blaze;

<sup>a</sup> Notes, 2 Pet. 3: 10.

as if on fire, from which it is inferred that the same thing may not improbably happen to our sun and his attending planets. To which I reply; granting the phenomena as described, they prove nothing. Recent astronomy reveals vast numbers of periodic stars;—i. e., those revolving about each other, or about a common center, and undergoing in consequence incessant variations in brightness, some even at times becoming and remaining long invisible. These alternations, in some instances of immense periods so that there is a total disappearance for many centuries even, are no proof of their passing out of existence. And as to the appearance of blazing, as if on fire, we need but to look at our own sun, which for unknown ages has literally been thus on fire, glowing in the flames of incandescent hydrogen, yet it is not consumed and gives no indication that it ever will be.<sup>a</sup>

3. As little, I think, does the passage mean that this world *as an abode for man*, in the natural order of things, is to be destroyed. In this sense of the term world,—*κόσμος*,—as already remarked, the Scriptures never speak of an “end” of it.

We should not forget that both the author of this

<sup>a</sup> Humboldt protests against the hypothesis of destruction,—of the actual combustion of the stars which have disappeared. “That which we see no more,” he says, “has not necessarily ceased to exist.—The eternal play of apparent creation and apparent destruction does not prove the annihilation of matter; it is a pure transition towards new forms, determined by the action of new forces. Some stars which have become obscure may again suddenly become luminous by the renewal of the same conditions which, in the first instance, developed the light.” *The Heavens*, p. 367.

epistle and those to whom it was addressed were *Jews*, whose conceptions of the earth and its history were derived from the Old Testament Scriptures. To the Jews, this was *the one Book*,—we might almost say the *only* book of instruction on all subjects whatever. It was their manual, not only of theology and morals, but of history and science and law and poetry. They read and taught it to their children (2 Tim. 3: 14, 15); they heard it read in the synagogues every Sabbath day. Luke 4: 16; Acts 13: 27; 2 Cor. 3: 15. Its language, its figures of speech, its way of conceiving and representing things, were imbibed with their mother's milk, and were as familiar as their own vernacular speech. Of the speculations of oriental or Grecian philosophy few knew any thing whatever. Of course, I do not mean to say that Inspiration might not impart to a Jew new truths, but even these he would express necessarily in modes and terms with which the nation was familiar, and without which he could not be understood. It seems to me self-evident, then, that the proper clew to the meaning of Peter's language is to be found in the Old Testament, and in what we know to have been the prevailing opinions of the Jews in that age.

Turning then to the older Scriptures, we find their language in respect to the duration and destiny of the earth, directly opposite to the assumed meaning of this passage. Ps. 78: 69. "He built his sanctuary like high places, like the earth which he hath established for ever." Ps. 93: 1. "The world also is established that it cannot be moved." Ps. 104: 5. "Who laid

the foundation of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever." Ps. 48: 6. "He hath established them—for ever and ever; he hath made a decree which shall not pass." Eccl. 1: 4. "One generation passeth away and another generation cometh, but the earth abideth for ever." Even in those places where the comparative transitoriness of the universe is used to lighten by contrast the eternity and immutability of God, the implication is the same. Ps. 102: 26, 27. "They—the earth and the heavens,—shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them and they shall be changed, but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." The meaning is that God's eternity shall exceed the most eternal things. So with the words of Christ, Matt. 24: 35. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." It is duration intensified by outrunning the ideal types of unchangeableness. It would be a sorry anti-climax to ascribe to the divine existence and promises a duration only exceeding what was confessedly transient.

We have a remarkable confirmation of this view of the Old Testament teachings in the writings of Philo. He was a learned Jewish philosopher of Alexandria, of the priestly family of Aaron, born a few years before Christ. His writings exercised a wide influence over the opinions of the Jews. One of his works is an elaborate treatise on "The Incorruptibility of the World," by which he means the perpetuity of "the heaven and the earth and all that is therein." We

cannot here follow his peculiar course of reasoning, which he professes to base upon the Scriptures, especially Genesis I, but his conclusion is pertinent to our topic.

“Therefore we are naturally led to conclude that the whole earth will not be dissolved by water, which its bosoms contain ; nor again will fire be extinguished by the air, nor again the air be burnt up and consumed by fire, since the divine law has placed it as a boundary to keep all these elements distinct from one another.”

He represents Moses as saying in Genesis that the world was created indestructible ; that days and nights, and seasons and years, and the sun and moon which measure time, “having received an immortal portion in common with the whole heaven, continue forever indestructible.”

He argues that if the world is to be destroyed, it must be by some other efficient cause, or by God. Not the former, for there is nothing which the world does not surround and contain. “On the other hand, to say that it is destroyed by God is *the most impious of all possible assertions* ; for God is the cause not of disorder and irregularity and destruction, but of order, and beautiful regularity, and life, and of every good thing, as is confessed by all those whose opinions are based on truth.” Sect. 16.

We may assert then with confidence, that the very impressive language of Peter could not have been taken by a Jew of that day as teaching the end of this material world. It would be an idea of which he had

never heard, one which he would think contradicted the Scriptures themselves, and which in the estimation of the most learned men of the nation was absolutely "impious."

And yet the same phraseology, understood in another sense, was perfectly familiar. Take, for instance, the prophecy by Isaiah of the overthrow of Idumea for her enmity to God's people. Its resemblance to that used by Peter will appear the closer if we suppose, as is altogether probable, that he and his brethren read from the Septuagint version. I give the two, literally translated, side by side.

ISAIAH 34: 4, 9, 10.

All the powers of the heavens shall be melted, and the heaven shall be rolled up like a scroll.— And her land shall be on fire like pitch, night and day, and shall not be extinguished for ever.

2 PETER 3: 10, 12.

The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the elements being burned shall be dissolved.— The heavens being on fire shall be dissolved and the elements being burned shall melt, and the earth and the works in it shall be burned up.

So, elsewhere, whenever the Lord appears to chastise wicked men and nations, his presence and the effects of it are set forth in similar language. Ps. 46: 6. "The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved; I bear up the pillars of it." Nahum 1: 6. "The Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea the world and they that dwell therein." Isa. 24: 19. "The earth is utterly broken down; the earth is clean dissolved; the earth is moved exceedingly." All this language, read habitually in private and in the synagogues, taught the Jews the terrors of God's judgments upon



wicked nations, but never for a moment the literal end of the world. Could Pēter, without a word of explanation, have used it in a different sense?

4. I understand, then, his reference to have been to the well known Jewish idea of "*the aion that now is*;" in other words, to the system of the Mosaic dispensation as already explained. Let the following particulars be noted.

(1). That aion, or world, was *to pass away*. It was to be destroyed totally and forever. So with "the heavens and the earth" in Peter. Prof. Stuart well objects to the common idea of a reconstructed earth, to arise from the ruins of the old one after it shall have been dissolved and purified by fire. "This new heaven and new earth are not to be constructed by fitting up and vamping anew the old and worn out systems. The first heavens and earth *pass away*." Com. Apoc. 21: 1.

(2). That aion was to perish *with a great noise*. There was to be the "great sound of a trumpet," and the wail of "all the tribes of the earth," the "falling of the stars from heaven," and the shaking of "the powers of the heavens." Matt. 24: 29-31. There was in literal verity the terrible crash of a burning city, the overthrow of palaces and temples and walls, the despairing cries of the dying, and the triumphant shouts of the victors. Taken both figuratively and literally, no single word could better describe the overthrow of the Jewish temple, city, and nation, with all their venerated and once divine institutions than that used by Peter—*ῥοιξήδόν*.

(3). That *aion* was to expire amid the same sort of *physical phenomena* described by Peter,—the wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath, blood and fire, and vapor of smoke, the extinguished sun and moon, etc. (Acts 2: 19, 20). Who can doubt that all these have the same signification in both cases? What clearer demonstration, therefore, that the events of which these are the concomitants are the same?

(4). For the time being, that *aion* was “*reserved unto fire.*” The word translated reserved is, literally, *treasured up*, something kept for a certain time or use. Now, this was precisely what John was commissioned to preach,—that the old dispensation was just going to give place to the new kingdom, and the old fruitless trees, the worthless chaff of the old threshing floor, were then to be given to the fire. The parable of the tares shows the field, with its mixed crop of good and bad, spared for a little while unto the harvest at the “end” of “this *aion*,” when the tares shall be gathered and burned in the fire. Matt. 13: 40. The drag-net shows the wicked at “the end of this age” cast into the furnace of fire. In both of the particulars—that the end of each world was to be “fire,” and that each for a brief space longer was treasured or kept for that destination,—the parallel between the two is perfect.

(5). Both the “*aion*” that now is and the “end of this world” should be at the Parousia of Christ. Matt. 24: 3. 2 Pet. 3: 4. That “the day of the Lord,” in verse 10, was the thing which the scoffers derided when they asked where was the promise of his Parousia, is too obvious to need proof.

(6). They were both, therefore, in like manner *near*, and *objects for watching and expectation*. It was because it had not already come, Peter says, that the scoffers derided the expectation of it. Nevertheless, he says, it will surely come, and bids his readers to be looking for and hastening it. As heretofore remarked, this implies the near approach of the event, for it is impossible to be watching and waiting for what is thousands of years distant.

(7). The dissolving of "*the elements*" mentioned by Peter points to the same event as the end of the *aion*. The original word—στοιχεῖα—occurs elsewhere in the New Testament five times, and in all with nearly the same meaning. Two of them are in Gal. 4: 3 and 9. "We, when we were children, were in bondage under the *elements* of the world." "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly *elements* whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" This clearly refers to the imperfect rites and doctrines of the Jewish law. Alford says, "All the enactments peculiar to the law, some of which are expressly named, verse 10." The next two instances are in Col. 2: 8, 20. "Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the *rudiments* of the world, and not after Christ." "If ye be dead with Christ from the *rudiments* of the world, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances," etc, "Ritualistic observances," says Alford. The only remaining instance is Heb. 5: 12, "Ye have need that one teach you again which be the *first principles* of the oracles of God." Here the reference

is not to the Mosaic law, but to the elementary truths of Christianity, though the same idea of what is rudimentary and imperfect is still implied. Now Peter says that in the Parousia, or day of the Lord, the *elements* shall be dissolved. What can this be but that the imperfect ritual and doctrinal system of Judaism, to which the early Hebrew converts were once in bondage and were ever trying to go back, should be wholly abolished? They were the chaff and stubble of the old system, which should be burned up at the introduction of the new and higher kingdom of Christ.

(8). The events attending the end of the aion seem to be described by the Apocalypticist in Rev. 6 : 12-17, in language almost identical with that of Peter. "Lo there was a great earthquake, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together, and every mountain and island were removed out of their places." I cannot doubt that this refers to the same subject,—the distresses that were to come upon Jerusalem and Palestine before and at the destruction of the city; but whether this interpretation be accepted or not is not important here. That the language does not describe the end of the world is clear from the fact that a long series of events in human history is represented as following after it.

I do not, then, find the doctrine of the end of the world, either as a planet or as the scene of human life

and probation, taught in the Scriptures. As read from the standpoint of the sacred writers and of the times in which they lived, and with conceptions of the divine arrangements such as they had been taught, we find only intimations of moral revolutions which were to introduce the new kingdom of Christ, attended, indeed, with unparalleled sufferings on the part of the guilty nation who refused to receive him as their King, but not implying changes in the structure of the physical universe, or any end, however remote, of the duration of a kingdom inaugurated in a manner so imposing.

And with these conclusions from Scripture harmonize, we believe, both reason and science. Often has the question thrust itself upon our thought, why should this world cease? It is a theater which affords to the higher orders of intelligence the grandest displays of the divine wisdom and goodness. "We are made a spectacle to the world [the universe]—to angels and to men." "Into these things the angels desire to look." Neither the efficacy nor the glory of the cross of Jesus will ever cease. The sacrifice for sin here offered was "offered forever." Heb. 10: 12. The priesthood he assumed was an unchangeable one. The divine Comforter who is given to renew and sanctify souls is to abide with us for ever. John 14: 16. If the existence of man, as shown by his creation, was "good" (Gen. 1: 31,)—a work over which "the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38: 7)—; if there is joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner that repenteth; if it be

a source of satisfaction to the heart of the Saviour to see of the travail of his soul, and to bring many sons unto glory ; why should that which so fills the universe and its Creator with joy ever be brought to an end ? Let it have continued six thousand years, or a million times six thousand, is there any conceivable reason why it should not be continued still as long again ? If the preceding period brought joy and glory to God, will not the succeeding one ? Will the Creator ever be weary of creating souls ? Will the Spirit ever tire of new-creating ? Will heaven be too full of the redeemed ? Will the universe be too full of happiness ? Rather, let us enlarge our conceptions of the scale of Jehovah's working, and of the magnitude of the kingdom which he has established in his Son ; and let our raptured ascription be "unto Him that is able to do abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which worketh in us,—unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus *through all generations of the aion of the aions.*" Eph. 1 : 20, 21.

Nor do I know any thing in science opposed to this conclusion. It is often argued, indeed, that the future dissolution of the earth by fire is made probable by the fact that it was once, in a by-gone geologic age, a molten mass, and that the numerous volcanoes still evince the existence of liquid fires within it. But God's works are progressive, and there is no reason to suppose that the processes by which the earth was brought from primeval chaos to be a *mundus*,—a world of order and beauty for the abode of man, are to be repeated, in this later stage of its existence.



Doubtless the earth contains within itself forces adequate to its own dissolution, if such were the order of nature or of God. But so might the autumn, if God willed it, arrest its fruit-maturing work and go to blossoming again. So might a man, by miracle, enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born. But because nature has had her births is she never to be sure of her maturity? Is it her *law* to go backward? Is there to be a reversed Genesis written at the close of the Revelation?

But our business, at present, is theology not natural science. It is to ask what is taught by the Bible, not by astronomy. Even if it shall ultimately be made probable, as a deduction of the nebular hypothesis, that the earth, by the process of cooling, will cease to be habitable, as the moon is supposed to be already, it would prove nothing to the purpose. Of such a theory the sacred writers could have known nothing, and therefore asserted nothing. That result, if conceded, must be at such a distance as to be practically infinite. There is no evidence that since man was placed on the earth the temperature of this planet has diminished by a single degree. Doubtless there was a time when a tropical climate reached far towards the poles; so there was a period when the polar ices extended near to the tropics. Astronomical cycles are, in such an inquiry as this, equivalent to eternities. Concede in regard to them whatever you will,—whatever in the progress of science may be ultimately demonstrated, it will still remain true that the Bible affirms nothing concerning them, and that, if not in the

strictest mathematical sense, yet in the spiritual and practical one, the earth, this home of man, the theater of redemption and salvation, "abideth for ever," and that of the kingdom of the Messiah there shall be "no end."

## CHAPTER X.

### THE NEW JERUSALEM.

The revelation which the seer on Patmos was commissioned to make to his brethren of the seven churches, to show unto them “things which must shortly come to pass,” closes with the vision of the New Jerusalem. Our survey of the work of Christ as King would not be complete without a brief inquiry as to the import of this city, and its relations to his kingdom.

That the New Jerusalem is a symbolic representation of the Christian church, or the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah, in some aspect of it, is universally believed. But when we ask in what aspect, and in what supposed period of it, we find a great variety of opinions. Some regard it as a symbol of the church in the millennium, or latter-day glory. Some, among whom is Alford, assign it to the period after the General Judgment, as “descriptive of the consummation of the triumph and bliss of Christ’s people with him in the eternal kingdom of God. This eternal kingdom is situated on the purified and renewed earth, become the blessed habitation of God with his glorified people.” Some suppose it to be a representation of heaven.

It seems to me that if we bear in mind the objects

for which, and the circumstances in which, this book was written, together with certain indications which are given in the description itself, we shall find a clew to its import which we may accept with some firm confidence that it is the correct one. Let us remember that at that date the church, or visible Christianity, was relatively small and feeble. The eighteen centuries of history which have familiarized it to us in its vast extent and power had not yet existed. It was, at that moment, under the ban of the Empire which ruled the world. Its adherents were few and poor and weak. It was a question whether Christianity itself was not on the point of extinguishment, as a light divinely kindled, indeed, but unable to survive in the murky atmosphere and under the fierce tempests of a hostile world. We can readily imagine the misgivings which might have crept over the minds of the suffering saints as they contemplated these things,—the secret question which would steal into their thoughts whether they were not throwing themselves away; whether it would not turn out that they were following a delusion which would soon come to nought; and whether, therefore, it would not be wiser for them to make peace with their persecutors, submit themselves to the authority of the Emperor, and be restored to ease and comfort. In such circumstances, what could be more potent to reassure their faith than the lifting by a divine hand of the curtain of the future, and showing them in a grand scenic picture *what the church of God was to be when seen as a whole*, as outlined in the plan and purpose of its Lord. So Moses,

before his death, having forfeited his right to enter Canaan, was yet, in order to strengthen his faith and confirm his joy in the fulfillment of the promise to his people, permitted to ascend the lofty mountain-top and look off thence upon the goodly land in its length and breadth, that he might for once feast his eye with the anticipated beauty and glory of that which had so long filled his thoughts, and been the goal of all his desires.

If this view of the purport of this vision be correct, it will suggest to us the error of making the heavenly city symbolic of *any* particular period in the history of the church. I would rather see in it that church *as a whole*; its foundations already laid in the “twelve apostles of the Lamb,” and its completion to be reached only in the grand consummation of the future. It does seem to me, however, that it is the church *on earth* that is meant, and not in the heavenly world.

1. This appears to be required by the *designations of time* which are expressly given in connection with it. Not to insist upon the general statement in the title of the book, that it referred to things which “must shortly come to pass,” we find the same declaration repeated immediately after the description of the city, and with manifest reference to it. “And he said unto me, these sayings are faithful, and true, and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must *shortly* —ἐν τάχει—be done.” Ch. 22: 6. I cannot think that this phrase can justly be applied to what should be thousands of years distant. If language was

designed to communicate an intelligible idea, it must, if not otherwise qualified, be that idea which its terms naturally signify, and these certainly imply that the fulfillment, at least in its beginning, was then near at hand.

2. The language under which it is described shows its *correspondence with prophecies* which we know related to Christianity as a whole, or the coming kingdom of the Messiah. The new heavens and the new earth must be the same that were predicted by Isaiah (ch. 65 : 17 ; 66 : 22), which most certainly had that reference. Says Mr. Barnes, "There can be no doubt, I think, that this refers to the times of the Messiah.—It is adapted, not only to comfort the ancient afflicted people of God, but it contains most important and cheering truth in regard to the final *prevalence of true religion*, and the state of the world when the gospel shall every where prevail." The city itself is identical with the temple and city seen by Ezekiel, as is apparent, not only from the general cast of it, but from the numerous minute resemblances in the two descriptions. Compare its quadrilateral shape ; the three gates on each side bearing the names of the tribes of Israel ; the river flowing out of the sanctuary ; the vital efficacy of its waters ; the trees growing on either side ; their monthly yield of fruit ; their unfading leaves, with life giving qualities ; the name of the city, denoting the dwelling place of Jehovah,<sup>a</sup> etc. "All,"

<sup>a</sup> For the ever open gates, the bringing in of the wealth and glory of the Gentile nations and kings, the absence of sun and moon, their places being supplied by the Lord himself, etc., the pattern seems to be Isa. 60 : 11-19,—one of the most remarkable of the prophecies relating to the Messianic times.



says Prof. Cowles of the former, "every several thing, provides for the great central fact, and adjusts itself around that living truth—Jehovah dwelling forever, and forever manifesting himself among his chosen; he their God, and they his people. Prophetically, it *looks down the Christian age* to its great central truth,—the Lord by his divine Spirit making his abode through all ages in the hearts of his children."

So, also, the promises given to the happy inmates of the city,—tears wiped away (compare Isa. 25: 8); no more death (ibid.); no more sorrow nor crying (Isa. 65: 19); all things made new; (Isa. 65: 17). Surely, it ought not to be doubted that this later prophecy, evidently so minutely modeled after the earlier one, meant the same thing. It was not a servile imitation, but an embellished and emphasized repetition of it, which every reader familiar with the inspired language would recognize at once, and accept as a renewal and confirmation of the blessed assurances given therein.

3. The relations of this city to *the rest of the world* imply its co-existence with the present order of things. The nations<sup>a</sup> and their kings still remain. Ch. 21: 24, 26; 22: 2. It may be questioned what is the precise meaning of the "nations" here. The original—*τὰ ἔθνη*—is the well known Jewish phrase denoting the Gentiles. When standing without qualification, it almost always has that meaning. For example, see Acts 15: 3, 7, 12, 14, 17, 19, 23. Many of the ablest expositors (Ewald, deWette, Bleek,

<sup>a</sup> The words "of the saved," in our English version, are unwarranted.

etc.), so understand it in this place. The words "in the light" of it are, properly, "through its light"—*διὰ τοῦ φωτός*—as denoting the instrument or means by which they are enabled to walk. Thus interpreted, the sentiment is the same as in Isa. 2: 2; 60: 3; viz. that the church of God should be an instructor of the Gentile nations in the truths of religion. Nor is the idea essentially different if the phrase be not confined to the Gentiles, but made of general application. Alford translates the passage "And the nations shall walk by means of the light of it." The same thing is implied in the leaves of the tree of life being for the healing of the nations. What nations remain to be healed in heaven, or after the day of judgment? The ever open gates must denote the freeness of salvation to all who will accept the offers borne to them by the church. Isa. 60: 9. The gifts brought by kings and by the nations must denote the glad homage which the world, subjected to Christ, shall offer to his cause and kingdom, which is so vividly portrayed by Isaiah. Ch. 60: 3-16.

"See barbarous nations at thy gates attend,  
Walk in thy light, and in thy temple bend;  
See thy bright altars thronged with prostrate kings,  
And heaped with products of Sabæan springs!  
For thee Idumea's spicy forests blow,  
And seeds of gold in Ophir's mountains glow,  
See Heaven his sparkling portals wide display  
And break upon thee in a flood of day!"

All this varied imagery fitly describes the perpetual office of the church to be a herald of salvation to the world (ch. 22: 7), and to receive from it in return

the grateful homage due to it and to the Lord who dwells within it.

4. It is declared that without the city are "dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." This is usually understood of the fact that the wicked are confined in the place of punishment. It may be that such was the intended meaning, but it seems more natural to refer it to their exclusion from the church here on earth, a meaning parallel with that of Gal. 5: 19-21. The word "without" apparently denotes the territory round about the city, and the persons named represent, as Stuart remarks, "the leading characteristics of the heathen persecutors." The figure suggests the condition of the church, under the indwelling protection of the Lord, safe within its angel-guarded walls, while its malignant and unclean foes are driven away into the outlying regions of sin and death.

But while the immediate design in the description of the New Jerusalem is to show forth the glory and felicity of the church of God on earth, when viewed as a whole, there seems also to be a tacit reference to the further glory of its eternal reward in heaven. For the blessed kingdom of Christ includes both worlds, the earthly as the vestibule and pledge of the heavenly. The earthly would not be complete without the heavenly. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." It is the church in its perfected holiness and crowned with the hope of heavenly immortality that constitutes the

city of God the object of his delight, and the temple in which he will dwell, whose name is "the Lord is there."

Thus viewed, the inspired vision of the New Jerusalem stands before his people in all ages as their encouragement to faith and service. It bids them never be faint-hearted; never to be weary either in suffering or doing. As the builder with brick or stone needs to look often at the plan of the edifice upon which he labors, that he may catch the inspiration of its symmetry and beauty, so may the Christian worker here behold the end to which all his toil and pains are directed. Christ is building his church, the capital of his kingdom. However slow the progress, whatever enmities or obstacles may hinder, it is ever going forward, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. Blessed are all they who work with their Lord in this undertaking. Blessed are they who see its glories by faith, and desire to share them. Thrice blessed they who are washing their robes, that they may have right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city.

## PART III.

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### CHRIST AS LIFE-GIVER.

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The reign of Christ as King is over a realm *delivered from death*. The one great fact in which his whole redemptive work is founded is, that man is a fallen being. Death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Rom. 5: 12. It is not alone that they are guilty because of their transgression of God's law; it is not alone that they have forfeited his favor, and come under condemnation. The race has lost by sin the power of self recovery. The vital impulse to holy feeling, purpose, and action has been destroyed, and unless replaced by a divine power not inferior to that of the first creation, cannot be kindled again. Hence the oft repeated Scripture testimony that men, in their fallen state, are *dead*,—"dead in trespasses and sins." Rom. 6: 2. Eph. 2: 1, 5. Col. 2: 13.

It was, then, one of the chief functions of the glorified and reigning Redeemer to *give life* to a world lying in death. "I am come," said he, "that they might have life." John 10: 10. He is declared

emphatically to be "the Life," (John 1: 4) i. e., having in himself the concrete office and power to impart it to men. "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself" (John 5: 26), i. e., to be a new source of life to all who should receive him. And in this capacity, under numerous suggestive figures, he offers himself to mankind. "I am the bread of life." John 6: 48. "I will give my flesh for the life of the world." John 6: 51. "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." John 4: 14. "As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." John 5: 21, etc.

It is in this office of Life-Giver that Christ styles himself the *Ἀνάστασις*,—the *Resurrection*. That office must be co-extensive with the ruin which had been wrought by sin, and this included the bodies as well as souls of men. Man's whole nature, the corporeal as well as spiritual, had fallen under the power of death, and must therefore be reached by the new life which Christ came to impart. Hence that sublime declaration addressed to the weeping sisters of Bethany, and through them to all the bereaved in all time; "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me even though he have died (*ἀποθάνῃ*—past), shall live, and he that is alive (in the flesh) and believeth in me shall never die." John 11: 25, 26.



## CHAPTER I.

### THE ANASTASIS.

It is not within the design of this work to dwell upon the doctrine of regeneration. It is one of the usual topics of religious truth, which are familiar to all. I pass this by, then, and proceed at once to the other great work of Christ as Life-giver, viz. the *Resurrection*.

The word itself—ἀνάστασις, *standing again*—suggests the primary idea involved in it. The act of dying nearly always occurs in a recumbent posture; man *lies down* in death. To *stand up again*, therefore, would naturally express the idea of a restoration to life, a second life occurring after death.

Assuming now the fact of such a second life, and waiving for the present the question of the time when it commences, our first inquiry will be as to the nature of that life. What will it be?—or in other words, *what will live again?*

1. It will be the *spirit* of man, his intellectual and moral nature, that which was made in the image of God, and by virtue of which he is enabled to have communion with God, and become a citizen of heaven.

2. It will be, in some sense, the *body* of man. This is one of the distinctive doctrines of Christianity. The future existence of the soul was taught even by

the heathen sages but most of them knew nothing of the resurrection of the body.<sup>a</sup> As already remarked, the salvation provided for man by Christ extends to all the elements of his being. The invisible, post-mortal world is not like that described by the poets, a realm of *umbræ*—pale, passionless ghosts, but one in which man's whole nature has place, with room for all its purified capacities and activities to expatiate in and to grow forever.

But a deeper and more important question here arises, viz: *What is the body?*

Of course, we recognize under this term that natural structure of bones and flesh and blood, which is common to man with the brute creation. It is a mass of solids and fluids, with their chemical properties, derived originally from the earth and destined to return to it. This, in ordinary speech, is what we mean by the body. But is this all? A fruit is, in common acceptation, the mass of pulpy or farinaceous material gathered, commonly, *around the germ*, to serve as temporary food for the young plant that is to spring from that germ. In more exact speech, the germ alone is the real fruit; the rest is matter auxiliary to it, designed to meet its wants in the initial stage of its existence, and after that, if not thus absorbed, to decay and cease to be. Is there, then, within this natural body, a germ, or elementary principle, not identical with a vegetable seed but analogous to it, which, in

<sup>a</sup> Perhaps the Egyptians should be excepted, whose practice of embalming the dead seems to point to the hope of another life.

strictness of speech is the real body, and to which this mass of earthly materials sustains a temporary relation, subservient to present uses, but destined when those uses are completed to drop into dissolution and be, in this form, no longer existent?

This question, it will be perceived, is one of *fact*,—*present fact*. It does not now look forward to the distant future to inquire what will be then, but it asks what is true of the body of man now, in its present earthly life. Such a question belongs, obviously, in the first place, to science—that department which we call *biology*; and in the second place to revelation, so far as the latter has spoken in regard to it.

#### SECTION I.

##### THE TESTIMONY OF SCIENCE.

On this question, then, we interrogate science, in the persons of several of its most distinguished interpreters.

Dr. Mark Hopkins, than whom we have no more reliable authority, at least in this country, in describing the present physical constitution of man, says (Outline Study of Man, pp. 251, 2):—

“The body, then, will not consist *merely of the matter* of which it may be composed at any given moment, and which is constantly changing, but of that in connection with *the organic power* that has been in it from the first, has wrought its changes, has caused it to be such a body rather than another, and given it its identity, so that we say we have the same body while not a particle of the same matter remains. How far this

individualized force may be preserved in its identity when it is *separated from the matter of the body, so that it may again re-appear*, perhaps, according to the doctrine of the correlation of forces, under some other form, it is not for us to say. Certainly, it is not the least marvelous feature of our present state that there are types that are constantly preserved, while yet having such a wonderful variety under them. And as the types are preserved, so there is no absurdity in supposing that, in some way unknown to us, *each individual force, that which is really the body*, may be preserved. The preservation of this type by generation after its kind seems natural because we are accustomed to it, but is really as mysterious as would be the continuity of the individual force. At any rate, we have here a *separate, necessitated form of movement, that builds up and maintains organization*, and we call the force thus building, together with the resulting organization, the Body."

We gather from this language the following propositions:

1. The body does not consist of matter only.
2. It has in it from its first existence an organic force.
3. In this force consists the bodily identity.
4. It is this which builds up and maintains the material organization.
5. This force, and the organization it builds up, together constitute the body.
6. This organic force may exist when separated from the matter of the body; at least, there is no absurdity in supposing it.

The venerable ex-President does not go further in describing this "organific force." He does not say what it is, nor does he give it a name. His opinion is valuable in that it substantiates the *fact* of its existence, while we look elsewhere for fuller information as to its nature and qualities.

President Noah Porter, of Yale College, is more specific. Recognizing the three-fold nature of man as consisting of body, soul, and spirit—*σῶμα, ψυχή, πνεῦμα*—he attributes the organific force to the *psyche*, or soul. "The term soul," he says, "originally signified the principle of life or motion in a material organism. It was pre-eminently appropriated to the vital principle or force which animates the animal body, whether in man or the lower animals. Traces of this signification may be distinctly discovered in the three-fold division of body, soul, and spirit, in which the soul occupies the place between the corporeal or material part, and the spiritual or noetic. This intermediate part was sometimes called the animal soul, and was believed to perish with the body."<sup>a</sup>

Dr. P. proceeds at length to argue that the soul (*psyche*) is the elementary principle of bodily life. "It originates the bodily organism and actuates its functions." The argument is one of great interest, and seems to be conclusive, but is too long to quote here. He next answers the objections that may be adduced, of which we need mention only one, viz: the view thus advanced is inconsistent with the doctrine of the soul's immortality. When the body dies

<sup>a</sup> Human Intellect, p. 6.

its vitality ceases: if the soul is the same thing as the vital force, it must cease likewise. Dr. P. answers this objection thus:

“That the soul begins to exist as a vital force, does not require that it should always exist as such a force, or in connection with a material body. Should it require another such body, or medium of activity, it *may have the power to create it for itself, as it has formed the one which it first inhabited; or it may already have formed it in the germ, and hold it ready for occupation and use as soon as it sloughs off the one which connects it with the earth.* These are possibilities, it is true, but they are sanctioned by sufficient evidence to set aside the objection which we are considering. *They permit the only theory of the soul’s continued existence in another state which is consistent with the facts of our present being.*” p. 39.

This elaborate work of the learned President is now the text book of psychical science in our highest educational institutions, and may be accepted as unquestionable authority. From the language above cited we may deduce several more propositions, both confirmatory of and additional to those before stated, viz.:

7. The organific force of the body is the soul (psyche).

8. The soul may have the power to create for itself, when necessary, another body than the material one, as a medium of its activity.

9. It may have already formed such another body, in the germ, and may be holding it ready for occupation and use as soon as it sloughs off the material body.



10. These two possibilities are the only ones on which the soul's immortality can be based, consistently with the facts of our present being.

Whether the soul exerts its organific force in forming and molding the body directly, or through the medium of this other body, Dr. P. does not say. Nor, assuming that such second body already formed and held ready for future occupation is a fact, does he give us his ideas as to its nature or qualities. It is however, by the supposition, immortal. It does not die with the animal body, but is to be its vehicle and abode after the soul by death has sloughed off the latter. It would seem, therefore, of necessity, to be non-atomic—i. e. not made up of atoms or particles like those which constitute matter, but of some such nature as the imponderable elements, light, magnetism, electricity, etc.

But these points, in regard to which President Porter expresses no positive opinion, are definitely pronounced upon by the latest biological science taught in Germany, as reported by Rev. Joseph Cook. In his thirteen lectures on Biology, he describes the discoveries which have recently been made in the arcana of life with the aid of the microscope, abundantly sustaining the doctrine of Pres. P. as to the soul being the source of the vital force. He claims also that it has been made certain that the soul *does* dwell in such an ethereal, non-atomic body as the President suggests. This fact he states in separate propositions, among which are the following:

“The late German philosophy holds the view that

the soul must be conceived as a property or occupant of a *fluid* similar to the ether.

“ This fluid, however, does not, like the ether, consist of atoms.—It is Ulrich’s view that the soul is the occupant of a non-atomic ether that fills the whole form, and lies behind the mysterious weaving of the tissues.

“ This non-atomic fluid is absolutely continuous with itself.

“ Its chief center of force is in the brain.

“ But it extends outward from that center, and permeates the whole atomic structure of the body.

“ The soul, as an occupant of this ethereal enswathement, operates in part unconsciously, and in part consciously.

“ It co-operates with the vital force.

“ It is not identical with that force.

“ It is the morphological agent which weaves all living tissues. It spins nerves. It weaves the muscles, the tendons, the eye, the brain. It arranges each part in harmony with all the other parts of the organism.

“ So far as the ethereal enswathement of the soul is non-atomic, it is immaterial.

“ This non-atomic, ethereal enswathement of the soul is conceivably separable from the body.

“ It becomes clear, therefore, that even in that state of existence which succeeds death, the soul may have a *spiritual body*.

“ The existence of that body preserves the memories acquired during life in the flesh.

“ If this ethereal, non-atomic enswathement of the

soul be interpreted to mean what the Scriptures mean by a spiritual body in distinction from a natural body, there is entire harmony between the latest results of science and the inspired doctrine of the resurrection."

These conclusions are not, according to Mr. Cook, mere theories, or as President Porter terms them, possibilities, but demonstrated facts of science. "We are following," says he, "haughty axiomatic certainty. In clear and cool precision, science comes to the idea of a spiritual body. We must not forget that this conclusion is proclaimed in the name of philosophy of the severest sort. The verdict is scientific; it happens, also, to be biblical. Is it the worse for that? \* \*

"In every leaf on the summer boughs there is a network which may be dissolved out of the verdant portion, and yet retain as a ghost the shape which it gave the leaf from which it came. In every human form growing as a leaf on the tree Igdrasil, we know that network lies within network. Each web of organs, if taken separately, would have a form like that of man. There might be placed by itself the muscular portion of the human form, or the osseous portion, or the veins, or the arteries, and each would show the human shape. If the nerves could be dissolved out and held up here, they would be a white form coincident everywhere with the mysterious human physical outline. But the invisible nervous force is more ethereal than this ghost of nerves. The fluid in which the nervous waves occur is finer than the nervous filaments. What if it could be separated from its environment and held up here? It could not be seen; it

could not be touched. The hand might be passed through it; the eyes of men in their present state would detect no trace of it; but it would be there.

"Your Ulricis, your Lotzes, your Beales, adhere unflinchingly to the scientific method. The self-evident axiom that every change must have an adequate cause requires us to hold that there exists behind the nerves a non-atomic ethereal enswathement for the soul, which death dissolves out from all complex contact with mere flesh, and which death thus unfettering without disembodiment leaves free before God for all the development with which God can inspire it." <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> In adducing the testimony of science to the present existence of "the spiritual body," it may be thought that some reference should be made to the phenomena of what is called "spiritualism," as offering confirmatory evidence to the same effect. Those phenomena, making large allowance for imposture and illusion, I should not be disposed to deny. The testimony of thousands of eye-witnesses of unimpeachable veracity establishes beyond a doubt that there is a residuum of fact under these manifestations which can be best explained by the presence within the human body of an occult, invisible, ethereal force, which, in special circumstances, reveals itself to the senses and produces abnormal and marvelous effects. If the existence of a spiritual body, like that described by Mr. Cook, be ascertained from independent sources, or if it be merely assumed as a hypothesis, it will certainly harmonize with those observed facts. But the whole subject is still so undetermined, and there is such a mass of deception and falsehood connected with it, that it can as yet scarcely be referred to in proof of anything. The most which it seems to me can be said at present is, that the phenomena referred to point in the same direction with those described in the text.

## SECTION II.

## THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Is the fact thus affirmed by science as to the present existence of a spiritual body within the material body, the investiture and medium of activity of the soul, confirmed by the teachings of the Scriptures?

1. In favor thereof, we have, first, an express recognition of the *threefold nature of man*, in which that doctrine is founded. 1 Thess. 5: 23. "I pray God your whole *spirit and soul and body* be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." The precise distinction between these is thus stated by Alford: "The spirit is the highest, and distinctive part of man, the immortal and responsible *soul* in our common parlance; the soul (*psyche*) is the lower or animal soul, containing the passions and desires which we have in common with the brutes, but which in *us* is ennobled and drawn up by the spirit"—*pneuma*. With this most commentators substantially agree. Dr. Hodge thinks that there are in man "only two subjects, or distinct separable substances, the soul and the body." In this, however, he stands nearly alone. Dr. Hopkins says, "We find three departments of force clearly distinguishable from each other, and suppose that the apostle Paul was justified as a philosopher in calling them Body, Soul, and Spirit." Dr. Candlish, in a sermon entitled "Life in a Risen Saviour," says, "The spirit is that higher principle of intelligence and thought peculiar to man alone in this world, to which we now usually restrict the mind or

soul; the soul, or that lower principle of animal life with its instincts, selfish and social, its power of voluntary motion, its strange incipient dawn of reasoning, which common alike to man and beast is so great a mystery in both; and the body made to be the material organ and instrument of either principle, the higher or the lower—these three in one, this trinity, is our present humanity.” Quoted in Lange’s Com. on 1 Thess. 5: 23. Similar are the words of Ellicott on the same passage. He describes the *psyche* as “the sphere of the will and the affections, and the true center of the personality.”

2. Next, we have the relation between the soul and the spirit indicated in Heb. 4: 12. “The word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the *dividing* asunder of *soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow.*” Not the dividing or separation of the soul *from* the spirit, but the piercing through of the soul *and* the spirit. The figure is that of a sword so sharp and driven with so much force as to penetrate through the bones of the limbs into the marrow within them. So the spirit lies within the soul, the inmost, or, what is the same thing, the highest principle of his nature,—that which bears the image of God and is capable of fellowship with him.

3. We have this lower or animal soul, the *psyche*, giving *character* to persons who suffer themselves to be actuated by it in spiritual things. 1 Cor. 2: 14. “The natural—Gr. *psychical*—man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they



are spiritually discerned." Nothing can be better than Alford's explanation of this. "The *animal man*, as distinguished from the *spiritual man*, is he whose governing principle and highest reference of all things is the *psyche*, the animal life. In him the *pneuma* or spirit, being unvivified and uninformed by the Spirit of God, is overborne by the animal soul with its desires and its judgments, and is in abeyance so that he may be said to have it not."—Again, Jude 19. The mockers, who walk after their own ungodly lusts, are declared to be "sensual—Gr. *psychical*,—having not the spirit—*pneuma*"—"We have," says Alford, "no English word for *ψυχικός*; and our biblical psychology is by this defect, entirely at fault. The *psyche* is the center of the personal being; the "I" of each individual. It is in each man bound to the spirit, man's higher part, and to the body, man's lower part; drawn upwards by the one, downwards by the other. He who gives himself up to the lower appetites is fleshly; he who by communion of his *pneuma* with God's Spirit is employed in the higher aims of his being is *spiritual*. He who rests mid-way, thinking only of self and self's interests, whether animal or intellectual, is the *ψυχικός*, the selfish man, the man in whom the spirit is sunk and degraded into subordination to the subordinate *psyche*."—The same sense is apparent in James 3: 15, "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, *psychical*, devilish."

4. We are now prepared to come to the consideration of that important passage in which Paul discusses directly the nature of the resurrection body. Let us

endeavor to follow carefully his teachings, without reference, for the present, to the time when the resurrection takes place.

“How and with what body are the dead raised?” is the question which he undertakes to answer. The severity of his language implies that the inquirer intended it as an argument against the possibility of a resurrection.

His first words are addressed to the tacit argument presented by the nature of death itself. “The body” says the doubter, “is lifeless; it is decomposed; its materials are scattered to the winds. How can it live again?”

“A foolish objection that,” says the apostle. “You know by experience that whenever you want to secure reproduction, you put the seed into a position where it dies. That is, not the germ, but the outer covering,—what in common speech we call the seed. The mere fact, then, of such death and decomposition of this outer fleshly nature of man is no proof that he will not live again.

“On the contrary, when this outer fleshly covering decomposes, then it is that the germ lying dormant within—a germ which had been forming and maturing during all the previous life of the plant—at once starts forth in an independent life of its own. The germ is not created at the time of the dying of the old seed,—much less, is its existence delayed till years or ages afterward. It was something already grown and matured; it only waited for the death of the seed to be loosed from its imprisoning envelope, and take on

development of its own. It becomes a new body, given by God as it pleased him, according to the law of life which he created, when he made every thing to bring forth after its kind.

“So, therefore, the risen body of man is not the old one that was sown, but a new one developed out of it by the power of Him who first gave it being.

“Do not suppose, however, because it is a new product divinely given, that it is not properly *a body*. Even these earthly bodies of flesh are not exactly the same; man, beast, bird and fish, has each its own yet they are alike flesh. So with bodies. There are heavenly bodies, such as angels have, and earthly bodies, as men; the former indeed much more glorious than the latter; just as sun, moon, and stars, each have their own separate rank in splendor.

“So also is the anastasis,—the resurrection life of those who have died. Their new bodies are immeasurably more glorious than the old ones, as much more as incorruptibility exceeds corruption, honor is better than dishonor, power than weakness, a spiritual body than a psychical body. Do not marvel at this phrase, for if there is a psychical body, one which is under the influence of animal passion, and made the servant of selfish desire and aims, there is also a spiritual body, one which is instinct with and subservient to the spirit. So also it is written “The first man, Adam, was made a living *psyche*.” Gen. 2: 7. The natural life, therefore, derived from this first head of the race must be a *psychical* one. But the second Adam, the second head of the race, became a life-giving spirit; so those

who are born anew from him have a *spiritual* life. In the order of nature this must come after the other. The first or *psychical* man, having been made out of the earth, was earthly; the second or *spiritual* man was from heaven. Like this earthly Parent will be his earthly seed, and like their heavenly Parent will be his heaven-born seed. And as we Christians have borne the image of the earthly, having *psychical* bodies, so we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly, having *spiritual* bodies. And in regard to these I say distinctly, brethren, flesh and blood—these material bodies—cannot be partakers of the heavenly kingdom of God; nor can corruption attain unto incorruption.”

Two things in this wonderful passage deserve special notice. First, the similitude of the seed-sowing. It was previously used by our Lord himself of his own resurrection. John 12: 24. Now the whole significance of this figure lies in the point that death is necessary in order to *liberate the imprisoned germ*. If there were no such germ, or if that too were dead, there could be no new life. That germ can not spring forth and grow until the husk, skin, and albuminous mass inclosing it are softened and decomposed, in a manner analogous to the death and dissolution of the body. What is more obvious than the inference that the germ of the resurrection body already exists in the present body?

The other point to be noticed is the affirmation that there are *two kinds of bodies*. “If there is a *psychical* body, there is also a *spiritual*.” So the best Mss. The two are spoken of as co-existing. Both verbs are

in the present tense, as if alike asserting a present truth. I cannot see how such a form of speech is consistent with the idea that there was, at that time, no spiritual body actually in existence, and would not be for a period then, at least, full two thousand years distant, and possibly much further.

### SECTION III.

#### THE RESURRECTION AS RELATED TO REGENERATION.

We have seen it, now, established both by science and the Scriptures that the *psyche*, the vital principle of man's nature,—that which has built up and maintains this animal organism, has also, as if in anticipation of the dissolution of that organism, formed in the germ another body of higher nature, ethereal and immortal, which in the language of President Porter “it holds ready for occupation and use as soon as it sloughs off the one which connects it with the earth.” The question, then, naturally arises why, if man, while still occupying the former body under the selfish instincts and passions of the *psyche*, becomes corrupt,—having the character attributed by Paul and Jude to the *psychical* man,—will he not when separated from the animal body, and become an occupant of the new ethereal body, be also corrupt; and why this, therefore, will not also become, like the other, a *psychical* body, unworthy of the appellation *spiritual*?

The answer, manifestly, is because by the grace of God, the moral nature has been *spiritually renewed* in all those that believe in Christ.

Observe the position which the elements of that nature hold toward each other in man's unconverted state. "The psyche," says Alford (Jude 19), "is the center of the personal being; the 'I' of each individual. It is, in each man, bound to the spirit, man's higher part, and to the body, man's lower part; drawn upwards by the one, downwards by the other. He who gives himself up to the lower appetites is *σαρκικός*—fleshly; he who by communion of his *pneuma* with God's Spirit is employed in the higher aims of his being is *πνευματικός*—spiritual. He who rests midway, thinking only of self and self's interests, whether animal or intellectual, is the *ψυχικός*, the selfish man, the man *in whom the spirit is sunk and degraded into subordination to the subordinate psyche.*"

Now, in regeneration this perverted state of the nature is reversed. The *pneuma*, or spirit, which in the unregenerate man was dead or dormant, is quickened. The word of God, sharper than any two-edged sword, pierces through the intellectual and emotional nature—the *psyche*,—into the spirit and rouses it to life and activity. The spirit of God touches it and brings it into *rapprochement*—communion—with himself. It derives thence strength to cast off the bondage of the *psyche*, and assume its proper place as the controlling power over the man. Soul and body alike are brought under its dominion. Henceforward the work of sanctification proceeds, the lower nature becoming more and more obedient to the higher, until the true harmony of man's constitution which had been destroyed



by the fall is restored, and a divine order, peace and purity reign throughout.<sup>a</sup>

Thus it follows that the resurrection, in the case of the righteous, is but the consequent and completion of regeneration. The ethereal, non-atomic body, being now the abode of a *psyche* which has been subordinated to the *pneuma*, becomes itself the suitable abode and instrument of the regenerate nature and is henceforth, in the strictest sense, a *spiritual body*. Says Prof. Reuss, "Paul more frequently places the resurrection in close and direct relation with the mystical ideas of faith and regeneration. In this aspect of it, men in whom the germ of the new spiritual life is already present and active have alone the prospect of a part in the second resurrection, which is finally to vanquish death and chase away the terrors of the tomb. The physical resurrection of the future is inseparably linked to the spiritual resurrection of the present. \* \* \* If this is the adequate expression of the thought of Paul, it would be no less true to say that the resurrection is already virtually accomplished in the regeneration. The future return to life after the death which awaits us all will be only the consequence of this first palingenesis."<sup>b</sup>

It follows, also, from the same premises that, in the case of the non-regenerate, the resurrection is one to confirmed sin and its dire accompaniments of "shame

<sup>a</sup> See the chapter on Conversion to God, in Heard's "Tripartite Nature of Man," pp. 201-221.

<sup>b</sup> Hist. of Ch. Theology, vol. II, pp. 194-196.

and everlasting contempt.” The new body, wrought and actuated by the unrenewed *psyche*, has become *psychical*, like the animal body; nay as much more so as its nature and capacities enable it to be. If the resurrection body be something already existent within us, generated and growing there as a part of our very nature, like a germ within its fruit, and taking on its character according to the character of the vital elements which dwell in it, then the resurrection, i. e., the emerging of that body from the decaying matrix in which it was formed and its *standing up*—*anastasis*—in a new and independent life of its own, is a natural event, as truly as death itself, and must take place with the wicked as well as the righteous. Our doctrine provides both for the fact and the results of that resurrection. To the believer in Christ, that natural event becomes a blessed one, through grace—the gift of God. Eph. 2: 8. To the unbeliever, it is a beginning of the immortal career of a being in whom the *pneuma* is forever dead, and which has lost henceforth all power of regeneration. “If,” says Dr. Bushnell, in respect to the future condition of the lost, “we talk of their final restoration, what is going to restore them, when the very thing we see in them here is the gradual extinction of their capabilities of religion? Their want of God itself dies out, and they have no God-ward aspirations left. The talent of inspiration, of spiritual perception, of love, of faith—every inlet of their nature that was open to God, is closed and virtually extirpated. This is no figure of speech, that merely signifies their virtual obscuration;

it is a fact. By what, then, are they going to be restored? Will God take them up, as they enter into the future life, and re-create their extirpated faculties of religion? Will the pains of hell burn a religion into their lower faculties, and so restore them? \* \* \*

A living creature remains,—a mind, a memory, a heart of passion, fears, irritability, will,—all these remain; nothing is gone but the angel life that stood with them, and bound them all to God.”<sup>a</sup>

#### SECTION IV.

##### THE TIME OF THE RESURRECTION.

When, then, does this spiritual body emerge from the body of time and sense, and enter into its new, its resurrection life?

As we approach this inquiry, it is impossible to suppress the feeling of sadness that arises from the thought that this event so full of both joyful and solemn anticipations has come to be almost universally regarded as far distant. The comfort under sorrow, the impressive admonitions against worldliness and carelessness, which would else have been imparted by it have thus been in great measure lost. The tie which connects it with the present life and renders it a rational and natural event has been sundered, and we are forced to look upon it as a stupendous and incomprehensible miracle. As on the kindred topic of

<sup>a</sup> Sermons for the New Life, pp. 183, 4. The discourse entitled “The capacity of religion extirpated by disuse,” is one of the most eloquent and impressive portraiture of the condition of a man who has lost the *pneuma*, and become wholly psychical.

the time of the Parousia, by pressing the mere costume of the inspired Word to the obscuring of its import as determined by the plainest laws of interpretation, the resurrection has been robbed of its power for present use and relegated to those shadowy regions of the future where it stands not as an impending reality, but at most as a subject of curious, half-skeptical speculation. Shall it be possible to restore it to that place in our faith where it was such a star of hope to the primitive Christians, while they waited amid the discomforts of this earthly tabernacle for "the house which is from heaven"?

Holding in abeyance, then, for a little while the traditions we have been taught, let us see whether God's word on being carefully interrogated will not give us a better view of this great subject.

We answer the proposed inquiry unhesitatingly, AT DEATH. Not simultaneously with all the family of man, in some supposed far-off epoch at the end of the world, but with each individual at the close of this mortal life.

1. This is shown in the very *constitution of man* as taught us by science. It is a direct corollary from those facts which we have seen affirmed by our highest authorities on psychology. When Presidents Hopkins and Porter, with the cool precision of philosophers, tell us of the three-fold nature of man; of the organic force which builds up this animal frame; which may exist separately from it; which may have already formed for itself another body, held "ready for occupation and use as soon as it sloughs off the one which

connects it with the earth," they are in fact teaching the doctrine of the resurrection at death. Mr. Cook may be a poet, but the *savants* whose long and patient labors with the scalpel and microscope he reports to us are something more. Who shall gainsay their testimony?

2. It is only upon the assumption of the resurrection at death that man's *immortality* can be shown to be probable or even possible. President Porter says expressly, that the present existence of the spiritual body ready for occupation and use at that time "permits the *only theory* of the soul's continued existence in another state which is consistent with *the facts of our present being*." I know it has always been customary to talk of "disembodied souls," but who has ever shown such a thing to be possible? There is no evidence that a soul separated from a bodily organism can maintain a conscious existence. It certainly can have neither force nor consciousness here unless such connection be preserved, and that too in a healthful condition. "Pure reason," says Prof. Westcott, "cannot suggest any arguments to establish the personality of the soul when finally separated from the body, and for *us* personality is only another name for existence.—Reason points to death as a phenomenon absolutely singular, which closes life so far as we know it, and *takes away the conditions* of our life. But if a single experience [the resurrection of Christ] can show that these conditions are not destroyed, but suspended as far as we observe them, or modified by the action of some new law: that what seems to be a dis-

solution is really a transformation: that the soul *does not remain alone in a future state, but is still united with our body*, that is, with an organism which in a new sphere expresses the law which our present body now expresses in this, then reason will welcome the belief in our future personality no less than instinct.”<sup>a</sup>

Coupling this dependence of the soul upon a corporeal organism for its conscious personality with the postponement of the resurrection, when such organism will be restored, to the far distant future, we come necessarily to the absolute extinction of the soul at death. The intervening space between the two events is a total blank. I am aware that many men of eminence, and even some entire denominations of Christians, have accepted this as an article of their faith. To my own mind, scarcely any thing could be more shocking. Have all the past generations of man perished in this abyss of nothingness? Have none of the race of Adam, Enoch and Elijah alone excepted, reached heaven? Is there no better hope for ourselves beyond this life than that of slumbering till the unknown and distant era of the resurrection in the dreamless sleep of the grave?

I will not stop to adduce the testimonies of the Scriptures, of which there is such an abundance, to refute what Calvin calls this “crazy idea”—*deliramentum*. These will sufficiently appear in other connections as we proceed. Rather should the assumption

<sup>a</sup>The Gospel of the Resurrection, by Brooke Foss Westcott, D.D. Regius Professor of Divinity, Cambridge, England. pp. 154-156.



be rejected which involves such a conclusion. There is no such intervening period between death and the resurrection. A strictly disembodied state of the soul is inconceivable. Science and Scripture alike assure us that "we shall verily be found clothed, not naked." 2 Cor. 5: 3. Alford's rendering.

3. This fact furnishes the only ground upon which the resurrection itself is conceivably possible. A *continuous personality only* can live again—ἀνιστάται. God can create a new being to succeed one that was laid in the grave ages before; but such creation is not a resurrection. Nor does the animal body supply the indispensable continuity. It perishes; it ceases to be. The chemical elements which once entered into it are indeed still in being, but they alone do not constitute a *body*. They never made what Dr. Hopkins calls "that which is really the body." There must be *with* these "the organic power that has been in the body from the first, has wrought its changes, has caused it to be such a body rather than another, and given it its identity." Says Prof. Westcott, "We cannot understand by body simply a particular aggregate of matter, but an aggregation of matter as representing in one form the action of a *particular law*, or rather the realization of a *special formula*. The same material elements may enter into a thousand bodies, but the law of each body, as explained above, gives to it that which is peculiar to and characteristic of it. —There is nothing unnatural in supposing that the power which preserves man's personality by acting according to the individual law of his being, in mold-

ing the continuous changes of his present material body, will *preserve his personality hereafter* by still acting according to the same law in molding the new element, so to speak, out of which a future body may be fashioned.”<sup>a</sup> If this continuous personality, then, be not preserved, there can be no resurrection. Whatever may be the value of the speculation as to what constitutes *bodily* identity, it is intuitively certain that there must be a *personal* identity, else the person raised is not the person that died. It is also certain that personal identity requires a personal continuity, the survival after death of that *psyche*, with its spiritual body, which is, as Alford says, “the center of the personal being, the ‘I’ of each individual.”

4. But our chief reliance as to this consummate fact of our existence, must be upon the testimony of the Bible. We take, then, first, the primary fact already adverted to that Christ attained his office as “the Resurrection and the Life,” immediately upon his ascension. It is an inseparable part of his great Messianic dignity and work which the Father gave to him as the reward of his sufferings. In its spiritual department, so to speak, that of giving life to dead souls, we know that he entered upon that work even before his death. “The hour is coming, *and now is.*” John 5: 25. Is it not altogether most reasonable to believe that shortly after he began, too, that other department, whose hour also “cometh,”—ἐρχεται—when all that were in the graves should hear his voice and

<sup>a</sup>Gospel of the Resurrection, p. 144.

come forth? Is it likely that he would be solemnly invested with an official function which was to lie in abeyance for unknown ages?

5. With this harmonizes his declaration to the sorrowing family at Bethany. To their view, the resurrection was far away—too far to be a source of comfort under their grief. “I know that he shall rise again,” said Martha, “in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, *I am the resurrection and the life*; he that believeth on me even though he have died yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” True, this does not say in terms that her hope was too remote, but it certainly leaves it to be inferred. In Christ, that which they deemed far distant was a *present* reality. The promise and potency of it was already embodied before them. “Whosoever believeth in me,”—(and the words show that he had reference, not to the dead Lazarus alone, but to all believers in all time)—is made present victor over death and the grave. No meaning less than this is at all commensurate with the tender and solemn interest of this occasion.

6. Take, next, the analogy employed by the apostle from *the germination of a seed*. Nothing can be more unmistakable or beautiful than the lesson taught us. “That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die.” The death and the quickening are in immediate succession. Dig up a sprouting kernel of corn, and see the new shoot springing up *directly out of* the old decaying seed. And it is only while the old still remains, though decomposing, that the germina-

tion is possible, Sever the germ from its matrix, and wait till the latter wholly disappears, and no power of quickening remains.

It has been said that "wheat found in an Egyptian mummy has been made to grow after its vital energies had lain dormant three thousand years."<sup>a</sup> Conceding the somewhat questionable fact, it only confirms our position. Even in that case, the seed was "not quickened until it died." It had been deposited in a position where light and moisture were excluded, so that the maceration and softening requisite for the liberation of the germ and its first supplies of food could not take place. There being no death, there could be no resurrection. To make the case really parallel to the supposed distant resurrection, let the wheat have died and been decomposed three thousand years ago, and then let it be attempted out of the slight impalpable dust remaining, if any, to effect germination and a new life. None can doubt what the result would be.

It may be said that God will *give* the new spiritual body, as it pleaseth him. True, but so he giveth the new body of the wheat, and "to every seed its own body." This, however, does not prove that he dispenses with natural laws in so doing. Such laws rule over all the other processes of life, its conception, its birth, its growth, its decay,—why may they not over its close, and the transition to a new life after death? "The corporeal renovation of human nature," says Isaac Taylor, "may properly be regarded as an estab-

<sup>a</sup> Bib. Sac., vol. II, p. 618.

lished part of the great order of the material and sentient universe, or as *a natural transition*.<sup>a</sup> Is not that one of the lessons designed to be taught under this very figure of the germinating seed, a process utterly inexplicable to human understanding, yet recognized by all as taking place under one of the most familiar and unchangeable laws of nature?

7. The reply of our Lord to the question of the unbelieving Sadducees as to the woman who had had seven husbands, directly asserts that the resurrection was a present fact. Luke 20: 27-38. Observe the present tense of all the words. The Sadduces deny that there *is* any resurrection, not *will be*. They ask, in the resurrection, whose wife *is* she? His reply describes a present condition,—they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; they cannot die any more; they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. Would that have been the form of the language if our Lord had meant to teach a resurrection in the distant future only?

But more than this, he expressly affirms that the resurrection had taken place in the case of Abraham and the patriarchs. “That the dead *are raised*—*ἐγείρονται*—(it is the word specially used to denote the raising of the *body*) Moses showed at the bush, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not the God of the dead, but of the living,”—i. e., of the risen. He professes to prove to the Sadducees the fact

<sup>a</sup> Physical Theory of Another Life, chap. 12.

of a resurrection—*ἀνδραστασις*—from the then present condition of these patriarchs, as having already attained it. The very point of the argument fails if at that time the *anastasis* with them had not taken place.

In the same conversation, while correcting the erroneous notions of his questioners about the condition of the departed, he says, “Neither can they die any more: for they are *equal unto the angels*”—*ἰσάγγελοι*. The connection shows the reference to be not to the knowledge, or power, or rank of angels, but to their subjective condition. The dead do not marry, or continue the corporeal life of this world (compare 1 Cor. 6: 13), but are like the angels. What, then, according to the current opinion of the Jews, was the condition of the angels? Let the learned Professor Louis Mayer, of the German Reformed Theo. Seminary, of York, Pa., answer. “The ancients had not the modern philosophical idea of *spirit*; they conceived spirits to be incorporeal and invisible, but not immaterial, and supposed their essence to be a pure air or a subtil fire.—When the ancient Jews called angels *spirits*, they did not intend by that term to deny that they were indued with bodies. If they affirmed that spirits were incorporeal, they used the term in the sense in which it was understood by the ancients, that is, free from the properties of gross matter.—In the Scriptures, angels always appear with bodies and in the human form, and no intimation is anywhere given that these bodies are not real, or are only assumed at the time, and then laid aside. It was manifest, indeed,



to the ancients, that the matter of these bodies was not like that of their own, inasmuch as angels could make themselves visible and vanish again from their sight, but this experience would create no doubt of the reality of their bodies; it would only suggest to them that they were not composed of gross matter. —I do not mean that the fact that angels always appeared in the human form is a proof that they really have this form, but that the ancient Jews believed so.”<sup>a</sup>

An apparent confirmation of this belief is found in Paul’s glowing description of the spiritual body, in 1 Cor. 15: 40. “There are *celestial bodies*.” It does not seem possible, as many have supposed, that he meant by these the starry or planetary worlds,—the “heavenly bodies” in an astronomical sense. The ancients certainly knew nothing of such bodies; nor is there any fitting comparison between these and the bodies of men. Many of the first commentators, therefore,—Meyer, de Wette, Alford and Stanley,—understand here the bodies of angels. Dr. Poor, the translator of Kling’s Commentary on 1 Corinthians (in Lange) adopts this view. “All the accounts given of the angels imply the possession of a material vehicle, more subtil and glorious than that of man, capable of visibility or invisibility, at the option of the spirit within.”

When our Lord, therefore, told the Sadducees that the departed are “as the angels,” or “equal to the angels,” how certainly would they have understood

<sup>a</sup> Am. Bib. Rep., vol. 12, p. 371-2.

him to mean that they have bodies like theirs. Not those which, as in this life, lay the foundation of marriage and these earthly relations, but such as the angels have, divested of animal passion, ethereal, celestial, spiritual. Could they have supposed he meant disembodied spirits, of whose subjective state they could have formed no conception?

8. The scene of the Transfiguration presents to us not only our Saviour in his transfigured body but Moses and Elijah in glorified bodies, who “spake of his decease—(literally departure) which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.” At the conclusion of the scene, the disciples who had been present were commanded to “tell the vision to no man until the Son of Man be risen from the dead.” It is added that they carefully observed the command, “inquiring with themselves what *is* the rising from the dead.” Can we question that whatever other purposes this event was designed to serve, one was to teach them something about the resurrection? Did they not behold an exemplar of what He was to be after that approaching decease, attended by the glorified law-giver and great prophet of their nation in their risen state, so that when their Lord should have ascended and become lost to their mortal sight, they might comfort themselves and the bereaved church with the assurance that he still lived, and that all his faithful saints who had gone before lived with him? And in all their anxious inquiries as to the nature of the resurrection, must not their ideas have taken shape and color from this vision? Moses and Elijah had risen,—one who

had died on Horeb, and the other who had been translated without dying, but now in the same subjective state, the same spiritual bodies, appearing as the type and promise of what all his people should be.

9. In accordance with this foreshadowed promise of the glorified state of his saints after death, Christ declares expressly that *they shall be with him*. "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that *where I am* there ye may be also." "I will that they also whom thou hast given me *be with me where I am*, that they may behold my glory." John 14: 3; 17: 24. But Christ ascended to heaven in his resurrection body. Wherever and whatever heaven may be, it is a sphere adapted to the abode of such a body. How then can his people be *with him*, if they too are not in such a personal condition of being as to be adapted to that place? Communion of intercourse, in this sense, seems possible only when there is a community of state. We cannot here have intercourse with our departed friends, and our Lord himself told the disciples that it was expedient for them that he should go away from them. The separation is the result of our different conditions of existence. So in heaven itself, how can his people see him, drink the new wine of the kingdom with him, walk with him in white, sit with him in his throne, and the like, if he have the glorified body of his Messiahship, and they remain still disembodied spirits? We may be told that we do not know enough of the nature of either body or spirit to affirm its impossibility, which is true. But all that we do know, and all the probabil-

ities which are discernible in respect to it go to show that if not an impossibility, it is at least an incongruity not to be received but upon decisive proof,—which here we have not.

“Our present body,” says Prof. Reuss, “has its seat in the soul; that is, in the natural play of certain animal, sensuous powers; the future body will have the spirit as its vital principle, and will be in its substance heavenly. The mortal element will, so to speak, be absorbed by a more powerful element, namely, life. 2 Cor. 5: 4. This idea springs again out of that of fellowship with Christ, which recurs constantly as *the fundamental idea of the whole system*. In truth, if our resurrection is a consequence of this fellowship, it follows that the conditions of the one will be in harmony with those of the other. We shall bear the body of the heavenly man,—of Christ glorified,—as we now bear, (and as he himself bore) the body of the earthly man,—the first Adam.” Vol. II. p. 198.

10. We find, therefore, that the actual expectation of the apostles and primitive Christians was that the resurrection was near. The coming of the Lord might even be in their life-time, in which case, there would be an instantaneous change in his living people to fit them to be with him. “Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.” 1 Cor. 15: 52. “The dead in Christ shall rise first;

then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds," etc. 1 Thess. 4: 17. A full consideration of these passages is deferred for the present. I refer to them now to show merely that whatever Paul understood to be the process, so to speak, of the resurrection, he expected that he and his brethren would live till it should occur. How is it possible to give any consistent meaning to his words on the supposition that he viewed it as many ages distant?

11. It was this hope of a resurrection at death that cheered the apostle under the trials of the present life. In Rom. 8: 18-25, he gives us a vivid picture of the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain together. He adds, "And not only they but ourselves also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves do groan within ourselves, waiting for the *adoption*, (i. e. the full results of it,—for the adoption itself we have; verse 15) to wit, *the redemption of our body*." Observe, it is not waiting for death, which would be a release *from* the body, but for the *recovery* of this body from the bondage of sin, corruption and pain under which it once suffered,—in other words, for the incorruptible and glorious body of the resurrection life. This hope, so ardent, by which the apostle adds, parenthetically, we are saved, does not lie in his mind as one that is to be realized only after he has lain thousands of years in the grave. As a matter of fact, such was *not* his hope, nor is it the hope of other Christians; nay, I maintain as heretofore, that it is a downright impossibility for any body to be in the

attitude of waiting, with expectation and desire, for what is as such a vast remove from him.

12. A fuller statement of the same hope is given in that most remarkable passage, 2 Cor. 4 : 14-5 : 10. The apostle, as before, is speaking of the consolations which sustained him under his present trials. "Knowing," says he, "that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus and shall present us with you," i. e. to his Father in glory as the fruits of his work of redemption. Compare Jude 24. "For which cause we faint not, but though our outward man—the body—perish, yet the inward man—the spiritual life—is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Most surely he refers here to a felicity *then awaiting* the saints, and not something which is to be reached only after thousands of years delay.

He then proceeds more distinctly to describe this glorious hope. Using the familiar figure of a house to dwell in, he exhibits the contrast between the present and the future bodies. The one is an "earthly" abode, to be occupied while we live here; the other is "in the heavens." The former is a "tabernacle"—σκήνος—frail and transitory; the latter an "edifice—οἶκοςδομῆν—of God, not made with hands and eternal." "We know," says he, "that if the one were dissolved, we have the other"—ἔχομεν—we have it now ready



and waiting for us, and not in the distant ages of the future. Alfred remarks, after Meyer, "The present is used of *the time at which the dissolution shall have taken place.*" Is it possible to understand him as meaning that there will be a vast period of duration between the two in which the poor naked soul shall "have" neither?

"For in this"—our earthly house,—“we do groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon”—(the figure becomes mixed, being partly that of a house, and partly that of a garment), “with our house which is from heaven.” The meaning is that we have an earnest desire to put on that new body, without a dissolution of the old; i. e. without having to encounter the pangs of dying. Then he throws in an incidental remark, having reference, probably, to those whom he had combated in his first epistle as denying that there is any resurrection. “Seeing that,”—(our translation reads, “If so be that,”—which seems scarcely intelligible) “WE SHALL REALLY BE FOUND CLOTHED, NOT NAKED.” “The sense,” says Alford is this; “For I do assert again that we shall in that day prove to be clothed with a body, and not disembodied spirits.” This seems to be a direct, positive, explicit declaration of the apostle that men do not exist after death as *disembodied spirits*.

He then proceeds, taking up anew the Christian's longing; “For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened,”—we groan heavily or deeply—“not that we would be unclothed but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life;” i. e. we do

not desire to be divested of a body, but that our new abode, like a garment, might be put on over the old one; that what was mortal in the latter might be absorbed (another figure, incongruous with the other two but very expressive) by the immortal. Indeed, he adds, to this very result—the losing of the mortal in the immortal God has been working, viz., in our regeneration and sanctification, the first fruits of which he has already vouchsafed us in the gift of the Spirit. Therefore, he repeats the confidence before expressed, that whether that wish could be fulfilled or not, he is ready to accept the alternative of putting off the body and passing to his immortal state by death, seeing that it would take him to the presence of his Lord. “Wherefore,” he says, “we labor that whether present” in this mortal body, “or absent” in the immortal body, “we may be accepted of him.”

Glancing now through this remarkable and extended passage; observing its striking figures, and endeavoring to discover precisely how the subject lay in the mind of the apostle, I cannot resist the conviction that he viewed the resurrection in a manner very unlike that of the traditional theory; that he believed the assumption of the spiritual body would immediately follow the demission of the natural body; not occurring therefore simultaneously with the whole family of man, nor at some distant “end of the world,” but successively, as individuals live and die, through all the ages of time;—coeval therefore in its beginning and duration with the Parousia under which it was to occur.

## CHAPTER II.

### RELATION OF THE RESURRECTION TO THE PAROUSIA.

Thus far, we have considered the *Anastasis* subjectively, as relating to men themselves,—the nature of the immortal body and the time when it is assumed. I now pass to inquire into its objective relations to the kingdom of Christ, and especially to the Parousia under which the resurrection occurs.

#### SECTION I.

##### THE PREPARED PLACE.

In that supreme hour of most intimate and tender communion, in the upper room of the last supper, our Lord for the first time disclosed to the disciples something of the future blessed state of his people. Heretofore he had spoken mostly of their duties and trials on earth, and only in the most general terms of the rewards that should follow. But he is now about to leave them. The sad fact is announced, and the gathering shadows of the mysterious tragedy and the dreadful bereavement already fall heavily upon their hearts. Beyond the tomb, as their thoughts in anticipation go with their departing Lord, they see little to cheer them. Sheol, the place of the dead under the earth, with its insatiable demands (Ps. 89 : 48 ; Prov. 30 : 16) and its barred and locked doors (Job 17 : 16 ;

Rev. 1: 18) was to a Jew the ideal of all that was gloomy, even though the later teachings of the Rabbis had mitigated somewhat the terrors of the ancient views. Compare Luke 16: 19-31 with Job 10: 21, 22; Eccl. 9: 10. It was, then, a new truth, transcending all they had ever conceived of, when, instead of the dark under-world whither past generations had gone, he pointed them upward to the glorious dwelling place of God. "In my Father's house are many mansions—I go to prepare A PLACE for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."

To that place, therefore, he went at his ascension. He entered not into the holy places made with hands, which were the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Heb. 9: 24. There he sat down upon his new throne, where henceforth he was to reign forever. We need not ask too curiously just *where* that place is. Possibly the relations of the spiritual to the material are not such as to permit an answer. If we were required to form a conception on the subject, we should be inclined to locate it in near proximity to the earth itself. I cannot think of any other world, amid all the suns and stars, visible or invisible, in which we can have so deep an interest as this, where the cross was set up, where the Spirit dwelt with men, where was the outer and visible kingdom of heaven. Says Isaac Taylor, "Our conjecture is that within the field occupied by the visible and ponderable universe, and on all sides of us, there

is existing and moving another element, fraught with another species of life—corporeal indeed, and various in its orders, but not open to the cognizance of those who are confined to the conditions of animal organization; not to be seen, not to be heard, not to be felt by man.”<sup>a</sup> If we may adopt such a conjecture as this, we may feel that even here in the flesh, heaven is not far away from us. Were the veil of sense rent away, and we could see as the young man did who was with Elisha in the besieged city, we might behold ourselves surrounded with its inhabitants and its glories. “Ye are come,” said the apostle, “unto Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born which are written in heaven.” Heb. 12: 22.

What the preparation was that Christ made in the place to which he ascended for the reception of his people, we do not fully know. One thing, however, we may confidently assert, that, by entering it himself in his risen state, he fitted it to be a *resurrection world*. It is not a place of disembodied spirits. He himself is not there as such a spirit, but in that glorious body which is the exemplar and the pledge of the glorified bodies of his saints. The common idea that it is a world of pure spirits—disembodied, incorporeal, naked,—has no warrant in either reason or Scripture. Whatever, therefore, was necessary to the freest communion between him in this glorious incarnate state and those

<sup>a</sup>Physical Theory of Another Life, chap. xvii. The entire chapter is worthy of being read in this connection.

who are to "be *with* him,"—whatever of structure and scenery and organization and even adornment was required to make it a fitting world for their abode and felicity, that, we may be sure, he provided.

The resurrection, then, in its complete idea is not merely a new existence in the spiritual body, but the reception of the risen saint into this "place prepared" for Christ's people. Of the former all are partakers. "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." Acts 24: 15. The latter belongs only to those who by faith in Christ become one with him; members of his body; quickened together with him, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

This work of receiving his people into his prepared place is that which Christ as the Life-giver performs in his Parousia. "If I go and prepare a place for you, *I will come again and receive you unto myself*, that where I am there ye may be also." It is described in 1 Cor. 15, as subdivided into three stages, of which his own resurrection and ascension is one. Christ the first fruits, next the dead in Christ, and thirdly those who should be alive at his coming.

## SECTION II.

### THE DEAD IN CHRIST.

"The dead in Christ shall rise first." The first act of the glorified Life-giver is to receive into his heavenly kingdom those of his own people who had deceased from earth prior to his coming.

There are three different phrases by which those



here meant are designated. In 1 Cor. 15: 23 it is "they that are Christ's." In 1 Thess. 4: 14, "them that sleep in Jesus," and in verse 16, "the dead in Christ." The primary reference, undoubtedly, is to departed Christians. The apostle had preached to the Thessalonians the near approach of the Parousia, with all the blessed hopes connected therewith, so that it was an object of the liveliest expectation among that people. But some of the believers meanwhile had died, and it became a question of deep anxiety with the survivors as to whether these would have any share in the expected glories. To meet this anxiety, Paul expressly says that those who should be alive at the Parousia should not precede those who slept. For as Christ himself had died and risen again, so God would bring those that slept in Jesus—(Ellicott translates "those laid to sleep through Jesus") with him. It is very clear that in this case departed Christians only are referred to.

By parity of reason, however, I cannot doubt that all the pious dead of the former dispensation are included in the same promise. For these all belonged to Christ. Though they had not known him in the flesh, yet they had seen him in the types appointed to represent him, and had accepted him by faith." "Abraham," said Christ, "rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad." The fathers, in the wilderness, drank of the Spiritual Rock, which was Christ. 1 Cor. 10: 42. And collectively of the saints of the former age, it is said, "These *all* died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them

afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them." Heb. 11: 13.

All those, therefore, who through faith in Jesus were sleeping in hope, should attain their completed resurrection at his Parousia. Let us note the recorded steps of that great transaction.

"The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." 1 Thess. 4: 16. In the parallel passage in 1 Cor. 15: 52 only one of these particulars is mentioned,—“at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound.” I cannot doubt that this is the same thing that is described by Christ himself in Matt. 24: 30. “They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet.” I have already given my reasons for regarding this language as the costume under which Christ’s assumption of his new kingdom is presented (see pp. 80–89); and also as being fulfilled, or beginning to be fulfilled, as was expressly declared it should be, in that existing generation (pp. 25–72). To assume that any other event or period is intended is utterly without warrant. Besides, the immediate connection shows that the apostle referred to a near event. He was expecting that both himself and his brethren would live to see it, and describes what should happen to those that did, founding thereon those earnest words of comfort and warning which are contained in the chapter following.

“And the dead in Christ shall rise first.” This is not the “first resurrection” mentioned in Rev. 20: 5;

as Ellicott says, "not with any reference to" that, "but, as the following *then*—ἐπειτα—suggests, only to the fact that the resurrection of the dead in Christ shall be prior to the assumption of the living." I understand by this, that the first act of Christ in his kingly glory, was to bring into his "prepared place" the whole number of the pious dead who had departed before that event. They had indeed survived death and were existing in the ethereal and immortal bodies which they had then put on, but they had not been received into the "many mansions" appointed to be the final abode of the blessed, and which had been "prepared" for their reception only when Christ ascended thither in his own resurrection body. In this blessed assumption to his own dwelling place, was their resurrection complete. The former was indeed a resurrection *from* the grave; the latter alone, was a resurrection *to* everlasting life.

Where, then, if the departed saints of the elder time had risen from the dead, but had not been received to the Christian heaven, had they been? We answer, *In Hades*.

Hades,—in Hebrew, Sheol,—was in the belief of the Jews the place of the departed, where they were detained while awaiting the final judgment. The clearest view of it given us in the New Testament is in our Saviour's narrative of the Rich Man and Lazarus, a narrative which must be regarded as confirming it, in its main features, as a reality. Hades was a place of happiness or suffering according to the characters of its inmates, but both these, with the

place itself were regarded as temporary, the one to be succeeded, after the judgment, by the final blessedness of heaven, the other by the lake of fire which is the second death.

It has been the opinion of many interpreters, especially in the Roman and Anglican churches, that Christ at his death visited this world of the departed—as it is expressed in the Apostles' Creed, "He descended into Hell." His purpose in so doing is described to have been to announce to the souls detained there the completion of his work of redemption, and then gathering his saints unto him, to burst the gates of that waiting place and ascend with them to his throne in glory. This theory is founded chiefly on the two passages occurring in 1 Peter 3: 19; 4: 6. It is probably alluded to in the ancient hymn of the "Te Deum," "When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

Whether this theory in all its details be accepted or not, the conclusion of it harmonizes remarkably with what I have conceived to be the meaning of this resurrection of the departed saints at Christ's Parousia. To this the apostle seems to refer in describing the incomplete state of these saints in Heb. 11. "These all, having obtained a good report through faith, *received not the promise*," i. e., says Alford, "THE PROMISE, by eminence, the promise of final salvation."—"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Alford continues, "We must understand by the expression

something better than they had, viz: the enjoyment here of the fulfillment of the promise, which they never had here, and only have there since Christ's descent into Hades and ascension into Heaven."—"The writer implies, as indeed, ch. 10: 14 seems to testify, that the advent and work of Christ has changed the state of the O. T. fathers and saints into greater and perfect bliss; an inference which is forced on us by many other places in Scripture, so that the result with regard to them is, that their spirits, from the time when Christ descended into Hades and ascended up into Heaven, enjoy heavenly blessedness." So likewise in Heb. 12; 23. "Ye are come unto Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, *and to the spirits of just men made perfect*, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." Such was the place prepared by the ascended Redeemer for his people; such the society to which it admits them; there already was the church of the first-born,—the spirits of the just perfected in the glorious bodies of the resurrection state, with Jesus himself, the mediator, in his risen body still bearing the marks of that great sacrifice which signified better things than the blood of Abel.

## SECTION III.

## THE CHANGE OF THE LIVING.

"Then we which are alive and remain [unto the

coming—Parousia—of the Lord: verse 15] shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” 1 Thess. 4: 17. “We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump.” 1 Cor. 15: 51–2.

The bearing of this passage on the time of the Parousia I have before discussed. See pp. 34–36. That Paul included himself and the Thessalonians as among the “living” at that time, most commentators now admit. The Greek word translated “which remain”—οἱ περιλειπόμενοι—says Ellicott, “is simply and purely *present*.—At the time of writing these words St. Paul was one of the ‘living’ and ‘remaining,’ and as such he distinguishes himself from the ‘sleeping’ and naturally identifies himself with the class to which he then belonged.” It is affirmed of these:—

1. That they shall “*not sleep*.” That is, they shall not, as those before them, descend into Hades, there to wait for Christ’s coming. They shall pass directly to his presence, without going through that intermediate place. Is not this the meaning of Christ’s words to Martha, “He that liveth and believeth in me *shall never die*?” We should remember what death was to the apprehension of a Jew; how drear and forbidding the dark under-world into which it would introduce him, to have any realization of what such a promise would be to him. It does not mean that the body would not be put off in the ordinary course of nature, but that this would no longer be *death*. It would be



as the apostle termed it, "to depart and be with Christ." Henceforth

"There is no death; what seems so is transition."

"By the death of Christ," says Alford (2 Tim. 1: 10), "Death has lost his sting, and is henceforth of no more account; consequently, the mere act of natural death is evermore treated by the Lord himself and his apostles, as of no account (compare John 11: 26; Rom. 8: 2, 38; 1 Cor. 15: 55; Heb. 2: 14), and its actual and total abolition foretold; Rev. 21: 4."

2. That they shall be changed *instantaneously*. This appears still to be in contrast with the state of the sleepers. A long time elapsed after they dropped the natural body, before they arose from Hades into the light and blessedness of heaven. But Christians who live in and under the Parousia shall pass thither directly. The change shall be "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Observe: it is not said that all shall be changed in the *same* moment; that it shall be simultaneous with the whole body of Christians who shall live under the Parousia. It could not be, in fact, because all do not live at the same time. Generation shall succeed generation through all the ages. Each individual, as he completes this life of probation shall, when the Lord calls him, pass at once to his "place" in the many mansions.

"One gentle sigh his fetters breaks;  
We scarce can say, 'He's gone!'  
Before the willing spirit takes  
Its mansion near the throne."

3. That they shall be caught up in the clouds into the air. Of course this is at the time of the change. The form of speech is apparently taken from the translation of the prophet Elijah. As he did not die but was caught up in a chariot of fire and cloud into heaven, so Christians will be rapt away in glorious cloud chariots,—“the clouds forming the element with which they would be surrounded, and in which they would be borne up to meet their coming Lord. The transformation specified in 1 Cor. 25: 52, 53, will necessarily first take place, upon which the glorified and luciform body will be caught up in the enveloping and up-bearing clouds.” Ellicott. Need it be said that these are not the clouds of our material atmosphere? The expression “into the air,” conforms evidently to popular apprehension, as when we speak of going *up* to heaven. Says Ellicott, “The air, as de Wette well observes, marks *the way to heaven*.”

4. This change of the living shall be,—that is *begin* to be,—at the same time that the sleepers in Christ are taken up to the presence of the Lord. “Caught up *together with them*; i. e., says Ellicott, “we shall be caught up with them at the same time that they shall be caught up.” Paul had just before said that those who were living at the time of the Parousia should not precede the sleepers; so now he says the sleepers shall not precede the living. Those from Hades, these from time; the former after long waiting, the latter instantaneously, shall experience the full power of the resurrection, being ushered together into the presence of the glorified and now coming Messiah.

5. Both these events shall be at his coming in his Parousia. The risen dead and the changed living shall be caught up together *to meet him* in that coming. The apostle adds, "So shall we ever be with the Lord." This shall be the fulfillment of his promise and of his prayer, that they whom the Father had given him should be with him where he is to behold his glory. John 17: 24.

It is scarcely necessary to say that this grand series of events occurs wholly in the invisible world. The coming of Christ with his angels, the blowing of the trumpet, the ascension of the risen sleepers, the instantaneous change of those living under the Parousia and their assumption to meet the Lord in the air,—all these are spiritual events, above the sphere of sense. Their indices appear here in the changed aspect of death to Christ's people, the radiant peace which fills

"The chamber where the good man meets his fate,"

and in the dear remains which we so tenderly lay away in the earth whence they were taken, but their occurrence as facts lies within the veil, to be first seen by the Christian only when the Saviour comes to him, to receive him to himself.

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I am very sensible how far the view I have given above of these difficult passages differs from the traditional doctrine of the resurrection. Differs in form, I mean; for I trust it is not inferior to it in its deepest significance and force. We may, perhaps, be helped

to a clearer estimate of its merits by glancing for a moment at the chief features of this traditional doctrine.

It is founded, as all know, on the literal acceptance of the scripture language in its baldest, most material sense. Of the signification of that language as used by the Jews in Christ's day, of their belief respecting death and Hades, and of the relations between those who lived before and after Christ's own death and resurrection, no account seems to be made. The body is this material frame, of bones and flesh and blood. Christ will come in the clouds of our atmosphere, with an angel blowing a trumpet, and with a loud voice will address the generations of the dead and bid them come forth out of the graves. Let a learned divine and poet of the last century describe to us the scene that shall follow.

“Now monuments prove faithful to their trust  
And render back their long committed dust;  
Now charnels rattle; scattered limbs and all  
The various bones, obsequious to the call,  
Self-moved advance; the neck, perhaps, to meet  
The distant head; the distant head the feet.  
Dreadful to view! see, though the dusky sky  
Fragments of bodies in confusion fly,  
To distant regions journeying, there to claim  
Deserted members and complete the frame.  
The severed head and trunk shall join once more,  
Though realms now rise between and oceans roar;  
The trumpet sound each vagrant mote shall hear,  
Or fixed in earth, or if afloat in air,  
Obey the signal wafted in the wind,  
And not one sleeping atom lag behind.  
So swarming bees that, on a summer's day,

In airy rings and wild meanders play,  
Charmed with the brazen sound their wanderings end,  
And gently circling on a bough descend."

The Last Day, by Dr. Young.

This gross, mediæval conception of the resurrection has doubtless been more or less modified in our own day. President Dwight, for instance, discarded the idea that the resurrection body is the same as this mortal body, either in the particles that compose it or the constitution, arrangement, and qualities of its elements. "Reason," says he, "decides with absolute certainty that a constitution which involves in its nature decay and termination cannot belong to a body destined for the residence of an immortal and ever vigorous mind." This was a vast innovation upon the ancient opinions. Had the learned President followed out his own reasonings, we can hardly doubt that he would in like manner have rescued the remainder of the doctrine from its repulsive materialistic aspects.

It is still generally held that the resurrection is to be simultaneous, at the far distant "end of the world," at the visible appearance of the Lord in the clouds to judge both the living and the dead. All this, as before said, is built up on the mere costume of descriptions relating to events which I have endeavored to show are now long past. The only coming of the Lord in the clouds that men were bidden to expect, they were also bidden to look for in the generation then existing. The only end of the world ever spoken of, was that which the apostle declared to be at hand. 1 Pet. 4: 7.<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> "The apostles, it is urged, looked for an immediate 'end of

The theory of a far distant simultaneous resurrection involves difficulties of the very gravest magnitude. It necessitates a belief in the extinction of the soul at death, or in the existence of a world of disembodied, naked spirits. The former of these is alike abhorrent to all the instincts and hopes of men, and contrary to all the teachings of the Bible. The latter, as I have tried to show, is opposed to all we know of the nature of man, and all we know of the nature and state of the heavenly world. It is inconsistent, moreover, with the very idea of a resurrection as involving the continuation of personality. It destroys that bond of vital union with Christ, our risen and glorified Lord, out of which our resurrection comes as a direct consequence. That union, as Prof. Reuss says, is "the fundamental idea" of the apostle's doctrine of the resurrection. "The theory," he says further, "of a universal and simultaneous resurrection is in fact taken from Judeo-Christianity, and harmonizes but ill with

the world,' and the event shews that they were in error. Yet to any one who really penetrates below the surface of the first age, it will be equally evident that the 'end of the world' was expected and that *it really came*. It is possible that the apostles themselves, like the prophets in earlier times, did not realize the mode in which their expectations would be fulfilled; it is certain that many who heard them affixed false and chimerical interpretations to their teaching; but in the light of Christian history their written words were fully accomplished. The destruction of Jerusalem is 'the meeting of the ages' [1 Cor. 10: 11] the death of the 'old world' and the birth of the 'new world.' The Lord 'came' when the acknowledged center of 'the people of God' was desolated. A spiritual and universal presence [Parousia] was substituted for a material and local presence." Westcott, p. 218.



the system of Paul which rests upon wholly different foundations. We shall not be astonished to find the religious consciousness of the apostle shaking off at times the fetters imposed upon it by this doctrine, and seeking a solution more in accordance with the premises of his own system. Thus the present life, which is represented as a temporary sojourn in a body which binds us to earth, is called absence, a separation from our true home which is with Christ. To be parted from this body is to be joined to Christ; it is to find the home for which our hearts sigh. By these same terms the idea of an intermediate state is set aside; there is no more room for it; but *the idea of a universal and simultaneous resurrection is rendered untenable also.*" Vol. II, p. 198. In like manner the late Prof. E. T. Fitch of Yale College says, "The resurrection of the body spoken of in 1 Cor. 15, is not the re-animation of the organized body that was laid down in the grave, but rather the gift to the soul of a far different body like that of the glorified Jesus, not of flesh and blood as before, but fashioned gloriously, such as Christians who remain alive at the coming of Christ will receive by miraculous change. Hence, it is not so obvious as might at first appear that these spiritual bodies of the saints are not *given to them at death.*" N. Englander, vol. XXV.

And says Prof. Reuss, "A natural consequence of what has been said as to the intimate connection between faith and the resurrection is, that there can be *no interval* between the present life and the future,—between death and the resurrection in the gospel sense

of the latter. If faith is the cause of life, the effect must follow wherever the cause exists and operates. If the bond between the cause and effect could be broken, the cause would remain forever dead and barren."

It is very possible that we shall be warned of the danger of entertaining the views here advanced, from the condemnation pronounced by the apostle upon Hymenæus and Philetus, "who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some." To this it will be sufficient to reply that the doctrine they taught was very different from ours. They understood the resurrection to be merely man's escape from ignorance by faith in Christ, which was consummated in baptism.<sup>a</sup> The real doctrine of the resurrection they denied altogether.

<sup>a</sup> Tertullian described it as "*ignorantiæ morte discussa, velut de sepulcro veteris hominis eruperit;—exinde ergo resurrectionem fide consecutos cum Domino esse cum eum in baptismo induerint.*" Quoted in Alford.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE RESURRECTION LIFE.

There are certain practical inferences suggested by the foregoing views which, though not sufficiently established by positive scripture teaching to be regarded as doctrine, seem to be highly probable, and fraught with much that is both comforting and admonitory in the anticipation of the future life.

1. The first is that the spiritual body, the ethereal investiture of the psyche or soul, having its germinal existence in the present body and emerging therefrom with the soul at death, retains in the resurrection state the *present human form*. The authorities cited by Mr. Cook as having demonstrated its present existence teach that it has that form now; that could it be dissolved out of the animal structure, as the osseous and muscular system, the veins, the arteries, and the nerves might be, it would be every where coincident with the human physical outline. P. 225. In the scene of the transfiguration, not only Christ himself but Moses and Elijah evidently had that form. The Saviour appeared in it to St. John in Patmos. Even the angels are always represented in the same manner. "We assume," says Mr. Taylor, "that the apparent import of some passages and phrases of Scripture tends to suggest the belief that the *die* of human nature, as to

its form and figure, is to be used again in a new world. Partly on the ground of inferences from general principles, and partly on the strength of particular assertions, we suppose that the fair and faultless paradisaical model of human beauty and majesty, which stood forth as the most illustrious instance of creative wisdom—the bright gem of the visible world—this form, too, which has been borne and consecrated by incarnate Deity—that it shall at length regain its forfeited honors and once more be pronounced ‘very good,’ so good as to forbid its being superseded; on the contrary, that it shall be reinstated and allowed, after its long degradation, to enjoy its birthright of immortality.”<sup>a</sup>

2. The second inference, in the same direction, is that having the human form, that spiritual body will wear, sufficiently at least for recognition, *the features* of the present body. President Dwight, in his sermon on the resurrection, says, “That the body will be the same, in such a sense as to be known, appears sufficiently evident from the Scriptures. Mankind will know each other in the future world, and their bodies will be so far the same as to become the *means* of this knowledge.” Vol. IV. pp. 434, 5. Here, then, we find an answer to the question so often wrung from bereaved and sorrowing hearts, “Shall we know our friends in heaven?”—a question forced upon them by the defectiveness of our traditional ideas of the resurrection. It is impossible to frame a definite conception of a disembodied spirit. Form and features are the result of extension, and ‘that is a property of

<sup>a</sup> Physical Theory, Chapter xi.

matter. The attributes of spirit are thought, feeling, volition, but these do not constitute personality. There is nothing in such case for the imagination, the creative faculty of the mind, to lay hold of and shape into a conception which it can think of, much less can view as corresponding to an actually existing being. Therefore, to ordinary apprehension the heavenly world is a realm of shadows, and the broken heart turning back from its cheerless emptiness cries out piteously for any evidence that the dear departed can ever be known. But if the soul goes forth not unclothed but arrayed in its glorious spiritual body, bearing the known and loved features of this life with their expression only intensified by the perfection they will have attained in putting on immortality, then the recognition will be even more easy than here on earth.

3. So, thirdly, the conditions are realized upon which *society* becomes possible. As the risen saint can "be with" his risen Lord, so risen saints can be with *each other*. There can be intercourse and communion between them. They can *together* worship and serve. From the East and the West they can come and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. Heaven becomes a community; its inmates members of the family of Christ, one in him as he is one with the Father.

4. It does not seem impossible or improbable that the *relationships* of the present world, in their spiritual aspects at least, may be continued in the resurrection life. Have not the words of Christ in reply to the Sadducees been pressed beyond his intended meaning?

In that life “they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels.” But that is not saying that the effects of this first of all earthly relations do not continue. The work of probation was very largely wrought out through these very relations. The mother is often as truly a mother to her son’s spiritual as to his earthly life. Husband and wife who were really united in love, and for twenty, forty, and sometimes sixty years lived together in the most intimate of all ties,—working together in the common tasks of life, and sharing together in all its outward experiences, become so molded to each other and assimilated in all the elements of their being, that they are spiritually one. It is a species of violence even to conceive of all this so done away as to render these two persons no more or different towards each other in the heavenly state than towards any others. So with the difference of sex. In it, probably more than any one thing of time, are the causes which determine human character. How is it possible that a retribution which consists in the *fruits* of an earthly probation should show no correspondence to these earthly peculiarities? How can it be true that “whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap,” if the reaping do not bear some distinct and recognizable marks of the sowing?

In the doctrine of the spiritual body, then, as now exhibited, we see a ground for anticipating the continuance, in all their spiritual aspects and results, of the present relationships of life. We do not believe that all the pure loves, the tender sympathies, the sweet companionships of time, which give to life here its



chiefest enjoyments, are to perish with the expiring breath. We cannot reprove as unfounded the yearning of the mother for the meeting with her little one at the portals of the heavenly mansions. Rather is it the very inspiration of Christian hope which sings:—

“She is not dead,—the child of our affection—  
But gone unto that school  
Where she no longer needs our poor protection  
And Christ himself doth rule.

“In that great cloister’s stillness and seclusion,  
By guardian angels led,  
Safe from temptation, safe from sin’s pollution,  
She lives whom we call dead.

“Day after day we think what she is doing  
In those bright realms of air;  
Year after year her tender steps pursuing,  
Behold her grown more fair.

“Thus do we walk with her and *keep unbroken*  
*The bond which nature gives,*  
Thinking that our remembrance though unspoken  
May reach her where she lives.”

So with all the other ties of nature. Because they are such we believe them to be immortal. Were there no other proof of this, the very fact that our Lord himself was born into these human relationships and sanctified them by his divine experience would be to us a pledge of their perpetuity. He will no more cease to be the Son of Man, than he can cease to be the Son of God.

5. In fine, we may conclude from all these considerations, that the heavenly world is much *nearer to us*, not only in space and time but also in its essential nature, than we have been wont to imagine. Though

it be a spiritual world, it is yet a world of *substance*. If its inhabitants are in part human beings glorified, is it too much to infer that its scenery, its employments, its joys, are those of earth glorified? Is there no meaning in the description of a heavenly city, with streets and houses, and a river of life, and fruit bearing trees, and white robes, and palm branches of victory, and harps, and vials of odors, and all manner of precious stones, and the bread and the new wine of the kingdom, of which the Lord will partake with his people? For disembodied spirits, indeed, having no element to connect them with a material universe, all these can have no appreciable meaning. But to those who have been made like to Christ in his resurrection body, they may all be as real as that body itself. They give us glimpses of a world having substance and color and warmth; a world that we can think of; with pleasures and businesses that we can anticipate, instead of formless shadows and mirages as unsubstantial as the fancies of a dream.

6. At the same time, we have a substantial basis on which to build those conceptions of *a life higher* than this of earth, which it is reasonable to expect in heaven. For as the spiritual body excels the fleshly in all the elements of beauty and strength and capacity, so we may believe that its separate experience both active and passive will be immeasurably superior to that of the present life. Mr. Isaac Taylor has drawn out the supposed particulars of such a condition in his "Physical Theory of Another Life," a work in which the boldest conjecture is mingled with the most careful

philosophy, in sketching the consequences which may be conceived to follow the substitution of a spiritual for the present animal body. They are, to state them in our own words, 1. An enlarged power of mind over matter, such as shall enable one to move at will through the physical universe. 2. A direct perception and knowledge of all the facts of that universe. 3. An intuitive knowledge of the interior nature and properties of all matter. 4. A perfect memory. 5. The power of incessant mental activity. 6. The power to carry on many processes of thought at the same time. 7. An intuitive perception of abstract truth, however complicated. 8. The power of exact infallible utterance, in other words, a perfect language. 9. The body a perfect instrument and servant of the mind.

I could not, if I attempted, develop the consequences of such a supposed series of facts as constituting, in part, the elements of the spiritual life, as this learned and able author does. I refer to them as giving us hints which we may use, and add to at our pleasure, in our endeavors to make that life real, and so an object of stimulating hope and rational expectation. To that end we need two things—that the world which is to be our final home shall be something higher than this, and at the same time shall not be wholly unlike this. While thus satisfying our most ardent anticipations, it will wear also aspects of familiarity that will make it a home to us. It will promise us society, scenes, occupations, and even service, like those to which we had been trained while fitting for that

world, only transfigured in glory and joyousness as becomes the dwelling place of the Lord.

“For doubt not that in other worlds above,  
There must be other offices of love;  
That other tasks and ministries there are  
Since it is promised that His servants there,  
Shall serve Him still.”—*Trench.*

## PART IV.

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### CHRIST AS JUDGE.

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In his Parousia, Christ was to exercise the functions of a JUDGE. "It is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." Acts 10: 42. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." John 5: 22, 23. This, indeed, is one of the prerogatives pertaining to him as King. That sovereign authority which gives law to his moral universe, guards also its honor and applies its sanctions. We have seen (p. 19) that in the Old Testament usage the two words signifying to *reign* and to *judge* are nearly synonymous, and often used interchangeably. But it is more in accordance with modern usage to conceive of the two as distinct, understanding by the latter the execution of law, and in general, the maintainance of the principles of justice and righteousness among the subjects of his kingdom.

## SECTION I.

## THE COSTUME OF THE JUDGMENT.

The form under which this part of our Lord's administration is presented to us, like most other matters in eschatology, is to be found in the Old Testament. Says the learned Joseph Mede, "The mother-text of Scripture whence the church of the Jews grounded the name and expectation of the *Great Day of Judgment*, with the circumstances thereto belonging, and whereunto almost all the descriptions and expressions thereof in the New Testament have reference, is that vision in the seventh of Daniel, of a session of judgment when the fourth beast came to be destroyed; where this great assizes is represented after the manner of the great *Synedrion*, or Consistory of Israel, wherein the "Pater Judicii" had his "Assessores" sitting upon seats placed semi-circle-wise before him, from his right hand to his left. 'I beheld,' says Daniel, (verse 9,) 'till the thrones or seats were pitched down' (viz. for the senators to sit upon; not 'thrown down' as we of late have it) 'and the Ancient of Days (Pater Consistorii) did sit,' etc., 'and I beheld till the Judgment was set' (i. e. the whole Sanhedrim) 'and the books were opened.' Here we see both the form of the judgment delineated, and the name of judgment expressed, which is afterwards yet twice more repeated. Ver. 21, 22, 26. From this description it came that the Jews gave it the name of *Yom Din*, and *Yom Dina rabba*, the 'Day of Judgment,' and the 'Day of the Great Judgment'; whence, in the



epistle of St. Jude, (ver. 6), it is called *χρίσις μεγάλης ἡμέρας*, the judgment of the great day. From the same fountain are derived those expressions in the Gospel, where this 'day' is intimated or described; 'The Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven.' 'The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his holy angels,' forasmuch as it is said here (ver. 1) 'Thousands and thousands ministered unto him,' etc., and that Daniel saw (ver. 13), 'One like the Son of man coming with the clouds of heaven, and he came unto the Ancient of Days, and they brought him (or placed him) near him,' etc. Hence St. Paul learned that 'the saints shall judge the world' because it is said that 'many thrones were set,' and (ver. 22) by way of exposition, that 'judgment was given to the saints of the Most High.'" Quoted in Bush's *Anastasis*, pp. 279, 80.

In his own description of the judgment (Matt. 25 : 31-46), our Lord somewhat modifies the form. The Judge is here the King sitting in majesty upon his throne. A vast retinue of angels attend him and wait to do his bidding. His heralds, with sounding trumpets, summon the nations of mankind into his presence. Their deeds are tried by the fundamental law of the kingdom,—the law of love,—of which the King himself in the days of his humiliation had been an exemplar. Those who have obeyed that law are received to the place of favor on his right hand and admitted to the honors and felicities of his kingdom, while those that have failed in that obedience are banished from his presence to the prison prepared for the King's enemies, there to be punished for ever.

Such is the costume under which the grand and solemn truth of the judgment is presented to us, and like that which invests the coming of Christ, it is specially adapted to promote the ethical purposes to be served by that truth. Nothing could be more awe-inspiring; nothing better fitted to awake in every being who is to stand at that tribunal that reverent fear of the Lord which is "the beginning of wisdom." If, however, we seek to fit it into a system of doctrine covering the whole field of eschatology, and especially to adapt it to the doctrine of Christ's Parousia and kingdom, it is necessary for us to go somewhat behind this costume and learn, if we can, more exactly what is signified by it.

## SECTION II.

### THE TIME OF THE JUDGMENT.

Popular apprehension assigns it, like the second coming and the resurrection, to the distant future. Not that this fact is any where expressly asserted in the Scriptures. It seems to be an inference drawn from the figure employed of a judicial session, after the manner of the great Sanhedrim, or of an oriental court where a monarch in the presence of his grandees dispenses his favors and his frowns towards his subjects. As the judgment is to extend to the entire family of man, so the whole are conceived of as *standing together* before the Judge, which implies, of course, that it must be after all have lived. The same impression has been strengthened by the phrases, the "end of the world" and "the last day." So that really a mere incident in

the costume, or form under which the majestic truth has been presented to our conceptions, has been taken as a literal representation of fact. The Judgment as the grand event which is to adjust for every individual the results of life,—the retribution for all its guilt, the reward for all its virtue, the source of all hope and comfort under its toils and trials, and of all admonition against its weakness and wrong-doing, is shorn of its power as an impending reality and made little more than a name. “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed *speedily*, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” Eccl. 8 : 11.

There are, however, very grave difficulties of a positive kind attending the theory which places the general judgment far away, at the so-called end of the world. For by that supposition, large numbers of mankind are not judged until long after probation has closed and after they have been for ages in heaven or hell. Take the apostle Paul, who had so longed to depart and be with Christ. We cannot doubt that his holy longing was gratified by the cruel edict of Nero full eighteen centuries ago. All this time, Paul has been with his Lord, enjoying the blessed resurrection of the martyrs, and ascending from grade to grade in the endless progression of glory and felicity. Are we, then, to believe that after so long a period,—nay, as much longer as from now to the end of the world,—he is to be recalled from his martyr’s throne and crown, to come and take his place by the side of Judas who equally long ago went “to his own place,” and with those who will have died but yesterday, before the

judgment seat, to give account of and to receive for the deeds done in the body? Surely not. All our ideas of fitness revolt from such an incongruity. The eternal blessedness of those who having died in the Lord rest from their labors is not to be broken in upon afterwards by such a proceeding. Whatever theory of the judgment involves such a conclusion *must* be wrong.

So with its assumed *simultaneousness*,—where but in the mere costume of the prediction is it to be found? Human life and probation are not simultaneous; if the judgment is to be, a portion of men must be judged before they live, or another portion long after,—which involves the inconsistency just noticed.

Let us see if a careful inquiry into the Scriptures will not discover a more reasonable view than is involved in either of those suppositions.

1. The office of Christ as Judge is an essential part of his office as King, and cannot be separated from it. If he now reigns over mankind as their moral ruler, he must in that very fact be taking cognizance of their moral conduct as obedient or disobedient subjects. He must, in the nature of things, approve the former and disapprove the latter. He may, in order to allow time for a probation, suspend for a while the administration of the proper rewards of their conduct, but even this is a *judicial* act, performed by a present judicial authority in present exercise. The details of the judgment,—the time, place, and manner of it,—are within his discretion and ordered by his supreme wisdom, but the *fact* of it is one already existing, because

he has already entered upon his supreme office as King. This must have been the meaning of his emphatic assurance to his disciples that before some of them standing by him tasted death they should see him coming in the glory of his Father with his angels, and *then he would reward every man according to his works* (Matt. 16 : 27, 28), i. e. would begin an administration of reward, as each individual should finish his probation and depart thence to appear before his throne.

2. The nature of moral conduct and of man as a moral being is such as to imply a virtual judgment, self registered in every act performed by him, which judgment is simply declared and confirmed at the bar of God. He who sins, in so doing places himself under condemnation. Whatever is fearful in being in that relation toward God and his law is already incurred, save only that for a time, while here in the flesh, he is in a world where he may repent and find pardon. This is what Christ himself says, "He that believeth not has been judged already"—*ἡδὴ κέχριται*. John 3 : 18.

Already, too, has this judgment been pronounced upon him. His conscience is the representative of God, and in his name speaks instantaneously of his guilt and punishment. And with what appalling distinctness and power this is sometimes done we all know,—how it blanches the cheek, and paralyses the limbs, and conjures up nameless shapes of terror to haunt the soul and fill it with "a certain fearful looking for of fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries." Thus all the elements that can enter into the final sentence exist already. They may be intensified by future

sin, and they may,—thank God,—be blotted out by repentance and the cleansing blood of Christ, but these do not alter the fact that the present character itself determines the present state. It needs no formal trial, as in human courts, to ascertain justice. Christ's judgment seat, the accuser, the evidence, the law, and the verdict are all in man's own heart.

3. It is implied in a state of probation that the results of it shall be entered on at the close of that period. In the present life man is in the forming stage of his being. Law in its strict requirements is made subservient to Grace. Life and death, heaven and hell, are held out to him for his choice, while instruction and entreaty and the discipline of Providence and, above all, the ministry of the Holy Spirit are given that he may be won to the love of God. Now all this implies that when the end of such a state is reached, its results are expected at once to follow. Both reason and Scripture are silent as to any second probation beyond this life. Why then should there be any delay in entering upon the due rewards of probation? Why should the good man who has toiled and suffered for Christ's sake,—who has finished his course and kept the faith,—be made to wait for the crown of righteousness laid up for him? Why should the sinner who has exhausted hope and become ready for "his own place," be kept from going to it? What end of justice,—what requirement of government, calls for delay for thousands of years before the end for which every thing else was but preparation should be reached?

4. The current language of our Saviour and the



apostles in relation to this subject seems to teach that the judgment period, or "day" as the Jews termed it, was then about to begin. Take, first, the great judgment scene described in Matt. 25: 31-46. "*When* the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, *then* shall he sit upon the throne of his glory," etc. But in the previous part of this discourse it is repeatedly and explicitly affirmed that that coming should be in that generation; and the words "when" and "then" link the judgment with it in most express terms. I can make no meaning of this language if it does not teach that the tribunal at which all nations should be gathered was to be established within the period mentioned. So with the earlier declarations just quoted. "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then shall he reward,—i. e. begin to reward—every man according to his works.—There be some standing here who shall not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." The same idea runs through all the writings of the apostles. Of the numerous passages heretofore cited to show that they regarded the Parousia as near, not a few mention the judgment particularly as then to be initiated. "He hath appointed a day in the which he will—(Greek, is about to) judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." It is not the simple future tense of the verb that is here used, but a phrase made with the auxiliary verb μέλλω, signifying "*to be about to do or suffer any thing, to be on the point of*" —(Robinson). It implies that the event to which

reference was made was very near. The same word is employed in 2 Tim. 4: 1. "I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall—is about to—judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." 1 Peter 4: 5. "Who shall give account to him that *is ready* to judge the quick and the dead." This phrase is stronger than the preceding; it denotes that all things are *prepared and waiting* for the event. Compare Acts 21: 13; 2 Cor. 10: 6; 12: 14; 1 Peter 4: 17. "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God,"—literally, "It is the time of the beginning of the judgment," a declaration which Alford expressly acknowledges as referring to the destruction of Jerusalem which was then near at hand. And in all those passages which speak of Christ's coming as a ground of joy or hope or fear, there is an implied recognition of it as the time when he will reward his faithful friends and punish his and their enemies,—in other words as the time of the judgment. The servants who had received the talents were to watch because they knew not at what hour their lord would come to call them to account for their trust. "Judge nothing before the time," said Paul, referring to the estimates in which the Corinthians were holding their different teachers, "until the Lord come who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God.—Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day, and not to me only but also to all them that love

his appearing.—Be patient, brethren, unto the Parousia of the Lord ; stablish your hearts for the Parousia of the Lord draweth nigh.—Grudge not one against another lest ye be judged—*οὐδὲ ἑαλέσθε* ;—behold the Judge standeth before the door.—Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me to give every man as his work shall be.” Rev. 22: 12.

Instead, then, of mere inferences drawn from the figures under which it is described or from the misunderstood import of the Jewish phrase of “the last day,” I adduce these numerous express statements that the Judgment, so called, or that period in which Christ was to possess and execute the office of a Judge over mankind, and administer the appropriate rewards for their conduct, disciplinary in the present life and penal in the life to come, was to *begin*, at least, with the beginning of his kingdom in the generation then existing. And to this have conformed the facts of history. It was but a brief space before the first Christians had evidence that their ascended Lord was a judge as well as a king. Even among their own number, two who had seemed to be disciples and were perhaps receiving special credit for their zeal, were unmasked by a more than human discernment and smitten in sudden death for their hypocrisy. It was the beginning of that winnowing process which the Baptist had said should mark the dispensation of the mightier One who should come after him. By a similar infliction, the Cyprian sorcerer, Elymas, was taught his temerity in resisting the preaching of Christ’s word by his apostle. Meanwhile, during that long period of forty years from the

ascension, the tempest of divine justice was gathering over the guilty city and nation once called the Lord's, which when at last it was executed struck the nations with awe, and has ever since stood forth in blazing light on the page of history as the great judgment from heaven upon the people who had crucified their own Messiah. And so it has been in all the ages. Rome, first the chastiser of persecuting Judaism, becoming herself a persecutor, was chastised in turn. Nero, the bloodiest of all her emperors, died like a dog in a sewer, and the monsters who succeeded him perished mostly by violence amid the execrations of mankind; the barbarous northern hordes at last over-running her territory, plundering her capitol, and partitioning out her empire as lawful plunder. A priest who usurped temporal authority and, as vice-gerent of the Almighty, claimed the right to make and unmake kings at his pleasure, and who in the pride of his power shed the blood of the saints not less abundantly than his pagan predecessors, is in turn thrust from his throne and made to drink the cup of humiliation which he had so often commended to others' lips. A nation whose capitol witnessed a St. Bartholomew's day, and whose supreme assembly sought by a decree to legislate God out of existence and voted death an eternal sleep, is made to feel the horrors of a revolution at whose recital the cheek turns pale. A great Republic which boasted of her Christianity while holding four millions of souls in iron bondage, is arrested in her guilty boasting, and taught on a thousand bloody battle fields that the Christ whom she professed to

worship was He whose office it was to break every yoke and let the oppressed go free. Do we need other testimony than the record of history itself to prove that there is a King enthroned over men,—ruling the nations with a rod of iron, and dashing in pieces like a potter's vessel? Says Van Oosterzee(vol. II, p. 801), “That the history of the world is a continued *judgment* of the world, is acknowledged by all who attentively and believably observe it.”

Thus for nearly two thousand years Christ has been the Judge of the living. At the same time he has also been the Judge of the dead. In the history of individual souls, the present life is a season of probation, a dispensation of mercy and grace from his throne. But it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment. In the invisible world, the judgment seat is ever set, and as the multitudes of men pass out of time they find themselves before that tribunal. They do not wait for ages before they are called to their account. Forthwith, as the scenes of eternity open on their view, they see the throne, the Judge, and the books; forthwith do they hear the sentence, “Come ye blessed of my Father,” or “Depart ye cursed.” In other words, whatever under these figures is signified of judgment and eternal award is realized without delay. These go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. Then begins the career of retribution which is to have no end. No subsequent judgment in some far distant cycle of duration is to break in upon it, to repeat a transaction which has already been fully per-

formed. The door of the prison house once closed will never be opened again; the children once safe in the many mansions of their Father's house will go no more out forever.

And this, we believe, is the "Day of Judgment,"—well designated as the Day of the Lord, and the Great Day. It is the day which began when Christ took his seat on his throne, and will last as long as his throne endures; that is, for ever. Is it objected that the word "day" implies a more limited period, something analogous to an ordinary solar day? But this is the very word chosen by inspiration to represent the great geologic periods of the creation. Says Prof. J. J. Owen, "The phrases 'end of the world,' 'day of judgment,' 'day of the Lord,' and the like, are not to be compressed to an inconsiderable period of time like our day of twenty-four hours, but in the very nature of things, must be referred to an *indefinitely prolonged period, the length of which is known only to God*. It is called the *day* of the Lord because it refers to a period definitely fixed in the counsels of eternity, and not because it is embraced in the limits of a common day. Thus in Gen. 2: 4, the work of creation is referred to as performed in a single day, whereas we are told in the preceding chapter that God was employed six days in the creation of the heavens and the earth. These days were probably great time periods, and yet we are not misunderstood, nor do we use language improperly when we speak of the day of creation. In like manner the process of the resurrection and final judgment may embrace long extended periods of time



and yet be properly referred to as the day of the Lord, the day of judgment, or still more concisely, *the hour* when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man and come forth." Bib. Sac., Vol. XXI, p. 369. So likewise, Prof. Van Oosterzee says, "It is self-evident that the imagery in which the last judgment is presented in holy Scripture admits of no literal explanation, and on that account all opposition to the reality of the fact by reason of the plastic form of its description arises, if not from malevolence, at least from misconception. Even in the Middle Ages it was readily granted—'totum illud iudicium, et quoad discussionem et quoad sententiam, non vocaliter sed mentaliter perficietur.'—*Th. Aquinas*." <sup>a</sup>

## SECTION III.

## AWARDS OF THE JUDGMENT.

I have already spoken of the blessed resurrection state of the righteous, a state which it seems superfluous to say will be eternal. Lest any untrue inference should be derived from an omission of that subject, I will venture a very few words here as to the punishment of the wicked.

Upon this awful subject the Scriptures give us but little specific information, and it were presumptuous to be wise above what is written. The terms which are used to describe it are probably figurative, designed to convey an idea of the fact and of its severity, rather

<sup>a</sup> That entire judgment, both as respects the investigation and the sentence, will be performed not in audible words but in mental processes.

than its precise nature. The leading idea of it is exclusion from the "place" prepared by Christ in his Father's house for his people, and banishment into the "outer darkness, where are weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." Of the locality, and the physical conditions of that abode we can affirm nothing. Of the mental sufferings attending such a state; of the pangs of conscious guilt, rejection from God's favor, the extinction of hope, the torture of ever unsatisfied desire, and the like, we may form some conceptions, but have no measures by which to estimate their amount. It is enough to say that the soul will be *lost*. Further than this it would seem best to leave the subject beneath the awful veil of darkness under which it is enshrouded in God's word.

On one point, however, I cannot deem the teachings of the Scriptures to be doubtful, and that is as to the *perpetuity* of future punishment. Whatever possible meanings the phrases may sometimes have which describe it, I cannot resist the conclusion that they are designed to teach us that in this connection they mean endless duration. If the Scriptures were professedly to set about affirming that doctrine, I know not how they could do it more explicitly than they have done. It is not alone in single terms or in direct assertions; it is implied in a great many phrases and incidental utterances which are often even more convincing, if possible, than the more positive forms of speech. Let it be remembered that our Lord himself is our principal instructor on this subject, and that the most fearful imagery and the most appalling language were spoken by his own gracious lips.

I may say one thing more. The decisions of the judgment are represented as final. I can find no hint of another probation after this present life,—a second probation for those who may be supposed to have had no “fair chance” in this. If any such there have been or may be among the inhabitants of time, they will most surely be fairly dealt with by a merciful God. With him we may safely leave them without attempting to find for them a grace that is nowhere promised, or a new probation of which Christ the Saviour has never told us.

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Our doctrine, then, may be concisely stated,—THE PAROUSIA OF CHRIST IS HIS ABIDING PRESENCE AMONG MEN IN THE EXERCISE OF HIS MESSIANIC OFFICES OF KING, LIFE-GIVER, AND JUDGE. Those offices are three in their aspect only, as relating to different departments of his administration; in reality, they are one, constituting that “glory” which he received of the Father in reward for his humiliation and sufferings. The Parousia commenced when, after his ascension to his throne, he began to “come” or be manifested to men in the mighty acts performed by him. His three-fold offices are executed simultaneously, running parallel with each other through all time. Their consummation will be the complete restoration of this world to holiness and happiness. Their duration will be forever.

Of the doctrine thus presented, I desire to remark in review :

1. That it is to be regarded neither as a *præterist* nor a *futurist* view ; rather does it include both. If it be affirmed that the Parousia began at the ascension, it is not meant that it is not also a fact of all the coming ages. If it be spoken of as the object of future expectation, it is not meant that it has not also begun to be enjoyed already. I ask especially that I may not be represented as saying that the resurrection is “past already,” or that the day of judgment occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem. The Parousia, including under it Christ’s reign as King, Life-giver, and Judge, is not an event, but a *dispensation*. If it began at the ascension, it is to reach also into the far distant future, is to be, in fact, everlasting. Viewed, indeed, as a whole, it may with great propriety be spoken of as still future, for these two thousand years since the ascension, in comparison with the ages yet to come, are but as the first ray of the morning to the long, bright summer day. Nevertheless the morning *has dawned*, the Day-Star has risen, though the day in its consummate glory is still before us. Or to repeat a figure already used,—we have set forth upon the illimitable ocean of Christ’s reign ; let it not be said that because we are as yet scarcely out of the harbor, we have not therefore left the wharf.

2. It is a view which *harmonizes*, as none other do with which we are acquainted, *all the teachings of the Scriptures*. Why is it that just now, as in fact has been true more or less during the whole Christian

period, the Christian church is so divided in opinion on this subject? The answer is, because the Scriptures themselves seem to teach two or more contradictory things about it. They affirm the nearness of the Parousia, and bid men to live expecting and watching for it, and yet say it was to be at the end of the world, and to be accompanied by the resurrection and general judgment. Now the two parties choose each their own class of teachings, and fail to bring into harmonious relations with it the others. Adventists choose the *nearness*, which is (or was) a truth, and then compel themselves to look for the "end" and all the dread phenomena of the winding up of human affairs as immediately impending events. Futurists, shrinking from the latter inference, *deny* the nearness, and defer the Parousia to the distant future. So with respect to the millennium. The Pre-millenarians are most surely right in holding that Christ was to come to *set up a kingdom* on earth, and reign over it as the Messiah, but are just as surely wrong in saying that that kingdom has not yet been set up and therefore the coming is future. Post-millenarians are certainly right in holding that the kingdom was established on the day of Pentecost and is to grow till it reaches its grand millennial glory, but are just as clearly wrong in holding that Christ was not to come till that consummation had been reached, and then not to reign over it, but to judge the world and immediately surrender the kingdom to the Father. Now the Scriptures cannot, when rightly interpreted, teach both these opposites; they cannot so contradict themselves.

There must be some way of harmonizing them, and this is what I have attempted to find. Take the Pre-millenarian doctrine (which seems to me least distant from the truth) and enlarge its conceptions of the Parousia both ways, carrying it back to the pentecost and onward into the future indefinitely; and then make the resurrection and judgment not single *events* but coincident parts of one grand *dispensation* under the reign of Christ the King, and the seeming contradictions are nearly all reconciled. Or take the Post-millenarian doctrine, and let it accept the scenes at the day of pentecost, which it acknowledges to have been *a coming of Christ*, as the beginning of the Parousia, then let it similarly associate with it the resurrection and judgment as parts of the dispensation, and discard the unwarranted idea of Christ's giving up his throne, and we come again nearly to the same result. The past, present, and future meet in one grand whole. All the varied passages of Scripture drop into place in entire harmony. We have no longer need of inventing a theory of double sense; of supposing the inspired writers mistaken; that the primitive church was required to expect and to watch for events then thousands of years distant; that these thousands of years are what the Scriptures mean by "quickly," "at hand," etc. Is not, I cannot help asking, a theory which comes into the midst of these conflicting opinions and parties, and with a wider range than either comprehends them both, conserving what is true and correcting what by reason chiefly of its narrowness is erroneous, reducing all to a substantial harmony,—is it not



self-evidently to be accepted as in the main the true one?

3. And this result, let it be observed, is obtained not by any sacrifice of the great truths which enter into the substance of the doctrine, but only by *modifications of the accessories* of time, order, manner and costume. The facts of the second coming of Christ, of his reign as King, of the resurrection of the dead, and the universal judgment, are fundamental in the gospel system; they constitute those "powers of the world to come" which enforce its demands upon every human heart. I would not yield for a moment to any teaching which rejected or weakened their solemn import. In my judgment, the views now advanced do neither. It can not detract from the Parousia that it is held as a dispensation rather than a transient event; that its date was A. D. 30 rather than A. D. 1880, or any other more remote. It cannot weaken its significance that it was spiritual and invisible, save only in the mighty works attending it, rather than visible, amid the clouds, with the crash of an expiring universe. It does not detract from Christ's kingly glory that he reigns by his Spirit and providence over a kingdom of redeemed souls, rather than over a visible organization whose capital is at Jerusalem. It does not take from the majesty of that kingdom that it is to be without end, rather than surrendered by its king as soon as he attains undisputed dominion. It does not make the resurrection any the less momentous that it occurs when the earthly life ceases, rather than after a slumber of ages in the grave. It does not diminish the

solemnity of the judgment that the soul stands forth with before the great white throne, rather than waits for that ordeal till the end of time. The *facts* involved in all these things are unchanged. The joyous promises they imply to Christ's people are undimmed. The solemn admonitions they afford to those outside his kingdom are not weakened. Life, death, probation, retribution, time, eternity, are all words of unabated meaning. Is it not worth while, then, to consent to such easy modifications in non-essentials—the mere drapery of the doctrine—as shall allow of a harmonious adjustment of the facts; the bringing of all that *is* essential into a symmetrical body of truth which may command the acceptance of all who receive and love God's word, and will be more than ever before the power of God unto salvation?

4. Nay, I am not willing to rest the matter there; I must insist that these views give a *greatly increased meaning and force* to all the truths involved in them. They make the Parousia not a matter of expectation only but a present fact. Christ *has* come. He is already on his throne. He is ruling men now. He is separating them,—by his Word and Spirit and Providence—as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; he is giving life to dead souls by regeneration; and the blessed resurrection life to his people when the earthly life is no more; he is pronouncing the sentence “Come ye blessed” or “Depart ye cursed” to those who having finished probation stand before him in judgment. Could our eyes be opened as those of Elisha's companion were in the besieged

city, we should see all these as present facts. They would not lie so remote from us, beyond the horizon of the future, as to have lost half their solemn significance. That we cannot now see them,—that we are still in the flesh,—does not alter those facts or rob them of their tremendous import.

Nor, let us remember, is that sight far distant from any of us. A very few days more, and the scene in all its unspeakable grandeur will burst upon our vision. It is but the cessation of this fluttering breath, the hushing to rest of this throbbing heart, and all that we now reason of and speculate about will break upon us as matters of knowledge and experience. Then, according to his prayer and promise, shall we be forever with the Lord; and let us not count it a vain expectation, too, that we shall be *like him*, for we shall see him as he is.

## APPENDIX.

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A few typographical errors in the preceding pages escaped the notice of the proof reader, the correction of which will be obvious without special mention. On page 100, 3d line from bottom, Matt. 23 should be Matt. 25.

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### ON CHRIST'S "COMING," P. 23.

"An unprejudiced comparison of the passages in which the seer speaks of the coming of the Lord shows that he understood any personal revelation or energetic self-affirmation of the exalted Christ as a coming of the Lord. Sometimes it is preliminary and refers to individual churches or members of churches; sometimes it is final and relates to all men; at one time it is a manifestation mainly of judicial chastisement, and at another of gracious blessings. Only from the connection can it be decided which of these meanings is intended in the particular case. Every personal energetic interposition of the Lord in the outer or inner life of the church is as really a coming of the Lord as his second advent will be." Gebhardt, on the Doctrine of the Apocalypse, p. 270.

### DR. DOLLINGER'S VIEWS OF 2 THESS. 2: 1-12.

After my remarks respecting the "Man of Sin" were written, (pp. 65-71) I had the pleasure of falling in with

the work of the distinguished Dr. Von Dollinger entitled "First Age of the Church." He is known as the chief leader in the recent "Old Catholic" movement, and is probably the prince of living ecclesiastical historians in Europe. He gives the same views that I have done in respect to this personage and the scope of the chapter in which he is described; and affirms also that it was held for substance by most of the early Fathers of the church.<sup>a</sup> I quote some extracts.

"The epistle is commonly supposed to have been written in A. D. 53. Claudius was then on the throne. His step-son Nero, Caligula's nephew, who had been brought up under the care of a dancer and a barber, was already married to the emperor's daughter, adopted into the Claudian family, and proclaimed by the senate, 'Prince of the youth,' (Princeps Juventutis. See Eckhel, Doctr. Num. viii. 371, seq.,) a title then officially designating the heir to the throne. It was well known that his mother Agrippina would only allow him and not Britannicus to succeed. Claudius had already commended him to the people by an edict, and declared in a letter to the senate that in case of his death Nero was of age to reign. Nero took his uncle Caligula more and more for a model, of whom Josephus says that only his sudden death delivered the Jews from extermination. Ant. 19. 1. And he soon surpassed his model. His reign corresponded to the apostle's expectation; on the throne he was really the Man of Sin, exalted over all gods and all sanctuaries. That he outdid all that the world had yet

<sup>a</sup> St. Augustine declares; "Ceterum, imperium Romanum et Neronem in illo loco Pauli intellexere J. Chrysostomus, Cyrillus, Tertullianus, pluresque alii patres, quorum locos indicat Coquæus." De Civit. Dei, xx. 19.

seen in shameless transgression of decency and law and was in the fullest sense of the word 'lawless,' is notorious. Pliny called him the enemy and common scourge of the human race. On the other hand, the Armenian king Tiridates publicly declared him before the Roman people to be his god, whom he adored as the Sun himself. On his entrance into Rome, on returning from Greece, sacrifices were offered to him all along the road. He counted it a crime in Thræas that he did not offer to his divine voice. Suet. 25; Dio Cass. 1. 62. p. 714. He despised all gods and worships, only for a while he served the Syrian goddess; but her image too he shamefully dishonored, and he took vengeance on Apollo and his Delphian oracle by depriving him of his lands in Cyrrha, killing men in the sanctuary, choking up the cavern, and dragging away five hundred statues.<sup>a</sup>

"Nero personally undertook nothing against the temple at Jerusalem, but he appointed Vespasian general in the war, and thus after his death introduced that desecration and abomination of desolation in the holy place which Paul, following the intimations of Christ (Matt. 24: 15), and the prophecy of Daniel (ch. 8: 11; 11: 31; 12: 11), called a sitting in the temple. The apostle did not, of course, mean this literally, but he meant to say that the heathen power would dominate even the temple; that even this or the holy city would be profaned by the worship of the emperor.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Religionum usquæquaque contemptor præter unius deæ Syriæ. Hanc mox ita sprexit ut urina contaminaret. Suet. 56; Dio. 1. 63. Pausan. 813.

<sup>b</sup>Origen had already perceived that Paul's words about sitting in the temple were simply an application of Daniel's prophecy.—Contr. Celsum 7.46—To imagine a literal fulfillment of Paul's prophecy is to forget that he was not accurately predicting the



“In the Sibylline books, too, Nero is mentioned as the destroyer of the temple. The Jewish author who lived at the time or near it knew well that Vespasian was the commander, but the real author of the war against Jerusalem was Nero. Christ gave as the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy the appearance of Gentile troops on the temple-hill; Paul’s prophecy that the would-be god should sit in the temple and be worshiped was fulfilled when the Roman eagles, with images of the emperor, were planted in the ‘holy place’ of the temple, and the emperor-worship of heathen Rome was regularly practiced where the service of the true God had been observed.

“Paul had already given the Thessalonians more exact information, orally, about the event he is writing of. He is here reminding them of it, and at the same time he recalls to their memory that he had also described to them the person who as yet stands in the way of the open appearance of the Man of Sin. ‘You know,’ he says, ‘him who is now in possession so that the Lawless One will first appear in his own time. But already the mystery of lawlessness worketh, or is already preparing for its open manifestation; it has to wait awhile, but as soon as the present ‘possessor’ is out of the way the lawlessness will be revealed.’<sup>a</sup> Claudius is here intended, and it is

future by virtue of any special prophetic inspiration of his own, but merely applying to the instruction of the Thessalonians the knowledge and expectation of approaching events the church had derived from the words of Christ. All that is essential in his description is fulfilled in Nero and the events connected with him.

<sup>a</sup> *Katechon* is commonly rendered, “he that impedes” (“withholdeth.” Eng. Ver.), but the word does not properly mean to impede, hinder, or divide, but to possess, contain, hold rule. See the passages collected in Dindorf’s Thesaurus. In the New

very intelligible why the apostle, in a letter which might easily fall into the wrong hands, expresses himself in so enigmatical and secret a manner. The Christians could not misunderstand him. And in fact, Claudius contrasts most markedly in this respect with his predecessor Caligula and his successor Nero. He had forbidden sacrifice and divine honors to be offered to himself as a god, and had further directed that the adoration paid to Caligula should not be continued to him nor divine homage be exhibited when he appeared in public. But Nero and Agrippina were impatient of his death, and soon after,—A. D. 54,—he was ‘removed out of the way’ by Locusta’s poison, and the new emperor-god was enabled to appear.

“This wicked one Christ will ‘destroy by the breath of his mouth and the brightness of his presence’; i. e. he will execute judgment on this Man of Sin, as he will also on Jerusalem; both alike will be an effect of his presence.  
\* \* \* Paul had a type of this wicked one in Antiochus, of whom Daniel said that he should come to his end without deliverance (Dan. 11 : 45), and whose death is treated in Maccabees as a divine judgment on the profaner of the sanctuary of the true God. And therefore the words of Isaiah which Paul has here partly adopted were already applied by the Jews to Messiah’s victory over his enemy Armillus,—‘With the breath of his lips shall he slay the

Testament, especially with Paul who most often uses the word, it always means to possess, hold; no where to restrain, not even in Rom. 1: 18, as the context shows. Chrysostom indeed interprets it *to koluon*, but only from following the traditional notion that the Roman Empire is meant. For the rest, the holder or possessor is here always the hinderer, he that stands in the way. When the Man of Sin is come into possession [of power] he will first come forward with his blasphemy. The Vulgate rightly interprets it “qui tenet.”

wicked.' Dan. 11: 45; 1 Macc. 6: 13; 2 Macc. 9: 7; Isa. 11: 4.

"If Paul connects the appearance of the 'Adversary' with satanic agency, that is all the more natural, as he connects the more potent manifestations of heathenism generally, the heathen rejection or hatred of the faith, with satanic operations. 'The god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers'—'works in the sons of unbelief.' 2 Cor. 4: 4; Eph. 2: 2. The use of lying wonders and signs, which Paul foresees, is again satanic. And it is noteworthy that Pliny tells us nobody was more zealously devoted to magical arts than Nero, in order that he might be able to command the gods, which he so eagerly desired that he even offered human sacrifices to them. (Nat. Hist. 30. 5). It is not however said that the 'Lawless One' himself would work these signs, but that men would be deceived by them to their own destruction. Paul had before his eyes Christ's prophecy; and the false prophet of the Apocalypse, the beast from the earth, who by great wonders seduces men to worship the beast from the sea (the emperor) is part of the same idea. Magical and theurgic acts were then as inseparable from heathenism as the heresies which sprung from heathen elements.

"The 'apostasy' which was to come first was the falling away from faith, the seductions of false doctrine, which Paul elsewhere mentions, and which, after its entrance, occupied the apostles. How solemnly Paul tells the Ephesians that after his departure, ravening wolves, false teachers, will arise, as well from without as from within the church, and lead the people astray! He meant the Gnostic heretics whom he clearly described afterwards in his epistles to Timothy, as apostates whose entrance

in the latter times the spirit of prophecy 'expressly' foretold. 1 Tim. 4: 1. They, by magical delusions, deceived the credulous and gained them for themselves.<sup>a</sup> The falling away Paul mentions cannot be one to be wrought *by* the Man of Sin. Of him Paul only knew that he would make himself a god, and put down or slight all other gods. He could not mean that a great number of believers would fall away simply to flatter the pride of this man-god and worship him. No sort of anxiety about an apostasy to this crudest, almost insane, form of heathenism is ever expressed throughout the whole New Testament, nor any warning given against it. Paul speaks of a strong power of delusion working this result. But the apotheosis of a despot could so little deceive that, as Philo remarks, all except the Jews took part in the divine adoration of Caligula, but purely out of terror and against the grain. But here again, it is only the intimations of Christ which the apostle follows. Matt. 24: 23, seq. He had connected a great deceiving with the period of the abomination of desolation in the holy place, and so also did Paul. The coming of the Lawless One would coincide with the apostasy wrought by miracle-mongering, false teachers, and magical signs. Two great judgments were to come together, the profanation and fall of the temple, and the delusion or falling away to Gnosticism of many believers. This last evil the apostle regards as a judgment on those 'who not having believed the truth, take pleasure in unrighteousness;' wherefore 'God will send them a strong delusion that they may believe the lie.'" Vol. 2, p. 268, et seq.

<sup>a</sup> The ancients call them satanical arts, and use the same word as Paul. So Justin Martyr, of Simon. Apol. 2. So Eusebius (3.36) of Menander. John of Damascus remarks (4: 26) that Paul means *feigned* miracles.

## GROTIUS ON THE MILLENNIUM, AND GOG AND MAGOG.

The following passages from the Commentary of the learned Grotius were discovered after I had written the sections relating to those topics. pp. 131; 137.

Rev. 20: 1.—*Aliud est visum, significans tranquillitatem quæ ecclesiis per Constantinum erat primum data, aucta per successores, fore quidam longam, non tamen usque ad mundi interitum.*

Verse 3. *Mille illorum annorum initium duci debet ab edicto Constantini, quod est apud Eusebium, in quo vineti draconis est mentio.*

Verse 4. *Constantini edictum pro Christianismi libertate datum fuit circa annum Christi 311. Mille post annis orta est domus Ottomanica quæ non in Persidem aut oras Romani imperii, sed in partes ejus intimas atque potissimas in Asiam Græciamque invexit Mahumetis religionem Satanæ repertum.*

Verse 8. *Hic ergo per Gogum intelligenda domus Ottomanica, quæ primum in ea parte Asiæ se ostendit.<sup>a</sup>*

<sup>a</sup>Rev. 20: 1. Another vision was seen, signifying that the tranquillity which was first bestowed by Constantine and augmented by his successors would last a long time, but not until the destruction of the world.

3. The beginning of the thousand years should be reckoned from the edict of Constantine related by Eusebius, in which mention is made of the bound dragon.

4. The edict of Constantine for the freedom of Christianity was issued about A. D. 311. A thousand years after this the Ottoman dynasty arose, which carried the religion of Moham-med, shown to be the religion of Satan, not only into Persia and the extremities of the Roman Empire, but also into its most central and powerful parts, Asia and Greece.

8. Here, therefore, by Gog is to be understood the Ottoman family, which first showed itself in that part of Asia.







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